

What to do



if you find a kissing bug

Never touch a kissing bug with a bare hand. The Chagas parasite can be transmitted to humans and animals.

If you collect a kissing bug, use a glove or small plastic bag to catch the bug to avoid touching the bug directly.



Store the bug in a sealed plastic bag, in a vial, or other small container. All surfaces the bug was on should be cleaned with a bleach solution.



It is very important for us to know:

- Exactly where the bug was found
- Date
- Time of day
- If the bug was alive when found
- What the bug was doing



Please write down this information to send with the bug.

Contact us with questions or to submit a bug to our Community Science Program.



Kissing Bug Community Science Program at Texas A&M University

Since the start of our program in 2012, nearly 1,500 community members have submitted over 7,000 kissing bugs to help us understand the ecology of kissing bugs and *T. cruzi*. Kissing bugs are tested for the parasite, and the results are used to learn about Chagas disease ecology and public health concern in the US.

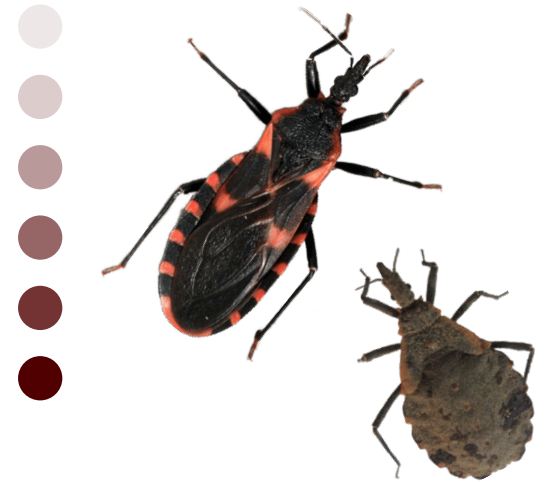


Website:

<http://KissingBug.tamu.edu>

Email:

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All about

Kissing Bugs





About Kissing Bugs

Kissing bugs are insects also called cone-nose bugs or chinch. Kissing bugs feed on blood during the night. There are several kinds of kissing bugs in the United States, all are about ½ - 1 inch long. The most common kinds found in Texas are shown on this pamphlet. Kissing bugs can be found around woodpiles, debris in the yard, and woodrat nests, but are also attracted to the lights and carbon dioxide associated with human houses and dog kennels.

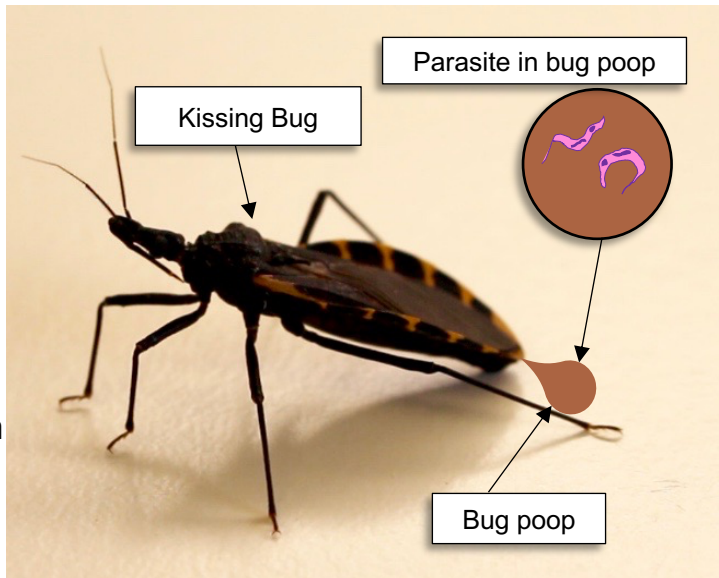
Kissing bugs are mainly active at night.

Kissing bugs can transmit a parasite called *Trypanosoma cruzi*, which causes **Chagas disease** in humans and dogs.

After taking a bloodmeal from an animal or human, the bug defecates, and the parasite is in the feces. Open wounds (such as the recent bug bite), mucous membranes, or ingestion are ways that the parasite can infect a person or dog.

Many years later, the parasite can cause heart disease and possibly death. There are few medicines to treat Chagas disease.

Some people have a severe allergic reaction to kissing bug bites. This appears more common in the southwestern US.



The Chagas disease parasite is NOT spread from the bug's bite. It is spread from the bug's poop.

Life Cycle

Kissing bugs start as small, shiny, oval-shaped white or cream-colored eggs. The eggs hatch into nymphs (young bugs).

The nymphs grow through five stages – starting out very small and getting bigger in each stage. Nymphs do not have wings.

Finally, kissing bugs become adults that are about 1 inch long (bigger than a penny). Adult kissing bugs have wings and can fly.



All kissing bug nymphs and adults feed on blood.