# Entomologist

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over and thought insects were the cause.

Boys and another Extension entomologist visited the woman's home, checked around and vacuumed. When they inspected the sweepings under a microscope they found no signs of insects and concluded that the caller probably just had dry, sensitive skin. So they suggested she get a jumpsuit in a soft, pajama-like fabric and wear it around the house. Apparently this solved the problem.

People in large offices sometimes suffer from what Boys calls "paper fleas" — particles of paper in the dry air — which can be

as irritating as real insects until the humidity is raised. "These are a real concern to the individuals involved, even though the cause isn't what they think," the entomologist said. Suggesting a solution sometimes required great

People also called about insect bites - usually wanting to know how serious the bite was. One person was concerned about the possibility of getting rabies after having been bitten by a praying

When gypsy moths invaded

Delaware, Boys became heavily involved in public information work related to this pest. He spoke at public meetings and help prepare news releases and publications on how to identify and control the insect.

One of the biggest frustrations over the years was doing what Boys called "fragmentation entomology" — rebuilding insects under the microscope after they've been sent in for identification. He received between 25 and 50 insects a week in the mail from people wanting information.

Unfortunately, few of these specimens arrived intact. Often all he had to work with was a pile of fragments tightly bundled in a wad of tissue surrounded by layers of tape. Accompanying this entomological nightmare might be a five-page letter telling where the insect was found and how it had affected the lives of half a dozen

people.
"It might take me several minutes just to unwrap the tissue and be able to behold this creature that had torn a family apart," he said. Sometimes all there'd be was a speck stuck to the end of the tape.

Then began the real work of assembling the bug under the microscope. It could take several hours to make a positive identification, based on the surviving evidence.

After spending 20 years telling others how to cope with insects, Boys has developed a rather philosophic attitude toward these creatures which vastly outnumber

any other organism on this planet. We have to learn to live with insects," he said. "We can't stamp them out - there are too many of them. Besides, there's a place for them in the food chain. We're learning to live with a threshold level we can get along with, particularly in crop work. They're always one step ahead of us, but controlling the troublemakers isn't

In retirement, Boys says he plans to put away his insect net and microscope — at least for the time being — and take up a fishing rod instead. But he stills enjoys identifying bugs and in time may start adding insects to the collection he started as a student entomologist.

an impossible task.'





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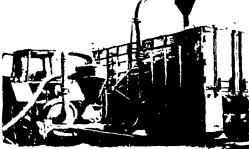
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