

KILL `EM ALL!

(Bugs and pests you hope you`ll never encounter)

The high heat, humidity and abundant food supplies in summer are heaven for insects and bugs, and as a consequence, they breed prolifically during this season. Here are a few to watch out forand how to nuke `em.

Cockroaches (Gokiburi)

We`re all acquainted with these little filthy little buggers. In Japan they can be huge.

Symptoms:

- You`ll see them running round.
- Girlfriend/Boyfriend screaming and pointing at the floor.

Prevention and Extermination:

- Remove sources of food and potential homes.
 - Wash dirty plates regularly and remove kitchen waste.
 - Avoid keeping piles of paper around as these make ideal homes for them.
 - Use regular insect spray to kill them.
 - Purchase gokiburi houses. These are cardboard boxes that have a very sticky sheet of paper inside. Once the roach goes in NEVER SQUASH A ROACH AS IT WILL RELEASE ITS` EGGS!



Tatami Bugs (Dani)

These bugs live inside tatami mats, bedding and furnishings. Don`t bother looking for them because most types are microscopic.

Symptoms:

- Small bite marks on the legs. They often appear in pairs.
- Tatami bugs may irritate pre-existing asthma conditions.

Prevention and Extermination:

- Ordinary insect spray won`t work as the bugs live inside tatami and furnishings.
- Purchase tatami bug spray from your local store. The cans are easy to recognise as they have a needle on them for pushing into tatami mats.
- The most effective way of dealing with them is by using some form of `bug bomb`

Mosquito`s and Sandflies

Mosquito bites are more of an annoyance than a health hazard in Japan. The mosquitos that carried Malaria were eradicated in

the 1950`s and 1960`s using DDT.

Prevention and Extermination:

- When airing out the house, use the screen doors.
- You can use the standard mosquito coils if you wish. They are relatively effective but smokey. Plus they can be poisonous for pet fish.
- The best approach is to spend a few thousand yen and purchase an electric mossier repellent. These plug into the wall and slowly vapourise a liquid over a period of up to three months (depending on the brand). They don`t smell.
- Mosquitos and Sandflies are (believe it or not) attracted to the colour blue and certain blood types.

Centipedes (Mukade)

They look horrible, they can get very big and they have a medically significant venom. Be very careful when dealing with these. The ones to watch out for have orange legs and orangy/brown bodies.

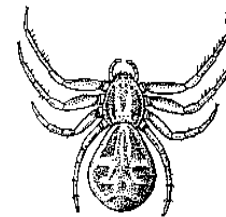


Prevention and Extermination:

- You can`t really do much to prevent them apart from trying to keep things clean.
- Killing them is relatively simple if you have a heavy shoe handy (although not on the tatami please). Insect spray seems to take a long time to act. Fire is very effective.
- Mukade poison (usually a powder) is available from most home stores.

Spiders

They can get really big here as there is so much for them to eat. Some are venomous (watch for amber coloured legs), so be careful.



Prevention and Extermination:

- They`re on our side. But if you still want to get rid of them just use standard insect spray.

Snakes (Hebi)

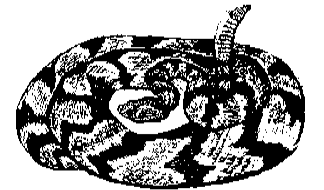
Frogs and mice live in paddy fields. There are lots of paddy fields so there are lots of frogs and mice. Snakes eat frogs and mice, there are lots of frogs and mice, so there are And thus ends today`s ecology lesson.

PLEASE BE VERY CAREFUL. Japan and Ibaraki has some extremely venomous snakes. Usually they will try to avoid humans if they see them (unless you are travelling to a fancy

dress party and are wearing a frog costume).

If you are bitten:

- 1) Try and remain calm. If you become excited, your heart beats faster and it will aid the spread of the venom.
- 2) Allow the wound to bleed freely for 15-30 seconds as it will allow some of the venom to flow out.
- 3) Apply a pressure bandage to the limb leaving the wound exposed.
- 4) Immobilise the limb at the same level as the heart.
- 5) If possible, make a note of the colouring, length, size and head shape of the snake for identification purposes.
- 6) Immediately seek help from the emergency services. If you are near a fire station or koban (police box) both should have supplies of anti-venom and staff trained for dealing with these situations.



MOISTURE, MOLD AND OTHER MADNESS

Along with the high temperatures, comes high humidity. Clothes won`t dry, mold grows at a crazy rate, and you just can`t cool down.

Mold

This stuff grows everywhere during the summer months due to the ideal growing conditions. Here are a few tips to avoid changing the colour of your clothes to all kinds of interesting shades of green.

- Mold prefers to grow in humid, warm conditions with stagnant air. Try to air out your apartment out on a regular basis (but remember those screen doors otherwise your apartment will be an entomologists paradise). Open the cupboard doors and allow the air to change in them too.
- Use moisture absorbers (*shikke tori*) in your cupboards and drawers. These should reduce the humidity in these areas and make it difficult for the mold to grow. You can purchase these from your local supermarket or 100 yen store.
- Make sure that you don`t leave futons and clothes lying on tatami for long periods of time. Tatami does get moldy and it is very expensive to replace.
- Hang your bedding out on a regular basis to dry in the sun (but don`t forget to check the weather forecast beforehand!).
- Resist the temptation to vacuum mold. All you will do is disperse the spores throughout your apartment.

Bathroom Cleaning



A quote from a well known JET
"I clean my bathroom every three months, whether it needs it or not"

Japanese bathroom cleaners are easily among the strongest in the world. Most have high concentrations of chlorine in them, so always use them with the window open and the breeze blowing through. Keep the bathroom window and door open to allow the breeze to blow through during the day. This will help to dry it out and inhibit the growth of mold.

Cleaning Supplies Vocabulary:

ant spray - ari no sacchu zai
 bath tub cleaner - furo yo sen zai
 bleach - hyo haku zai
 chlorine bleach - enso kei hyo haku zai
 color fast (non-chlorine) bleach - sanso kei hyo haku zai
 drain cleaner - paipu kurina
 dust mite or tatami mite killers - dani no kujo
 mildew spray - kabi kira
 moisture collectors - joshitsu zai, shikke tori
 mosquito coil - katori senko
 electric mosquito repellent - denshi katori
 moth repellent - bochuzai
 roach hotel - gokiburi hoi hoi
 room freshener - hoko zai
 for toilets - toire yo
 toilet cleaner - toire yo sen zai
 toilet plunger - tsumari tori ("blockage take out")

Food Handling

High temperatures also create ideal growing conditions for bacteria also. Be VERY careful when handling and storing food over the summer months.

- Always refrigerate food that you are not going to use immediately.
- Always clean and disinfect food preparation surfaces and equipment *before* and *after* preparing food.
- It is very common in Japan to see food that should be refrigerated, sitting exposed for long periods of time. Be a little more selective about the foods that you eat during the

summer months.

(NB. Before coming to Japan I had never had food poisoning before. However, in the last 2 years that I have been here, I have had it 3 times. In each instance it was from commercially prepared food. It certainly makes you think. . . .)

Air Conditioners, Dehumidifiers and Heaters(?)

Hurray for airconditioning. Not only can they cool your apartment down to a level somewhat lower than a furnace, the newer ones can also dehumidify the air also. Sometimes all you need to do is remove the excess moisture from the air to make it liveable inside your apartment. Those with older a/c units can purchase standalone dehumidifiers for about 1-2 man at most denki stores.

Designate one room as the `cool` room in your apartment. Have a look round the room and try to find areas where the heat may seep in and try and think of ways of stopping this occurring. This tip is also useful during the winter months when the reverse is happening. Keep this room closed off from the rest of the house when you are using it.

- Airconditioners need cleaning too. The filters on a/c units should really be cleaned out once a month to allow the machine to operate efficiently. Not only this, the dust on the filters will trap moisture and give off a musty smell if not cleaned often.
- Make sure that the drainage pipe hasn't clogged up during winter. It is usually a flexible clear, or white, pipe that empties water somewhere around the external condensor unit (the big square box with the fan outside your apartment). If it is clogged, and you use the dehumidifier, you'll have a rainstorm erupting from your a/c unit.
- Occasionally a/c units will need a bit of deep cleaning. Once you have cleaned the filters, use an a/c cleaning spray (available at the supermarket) to clean the internal radiator. The spray will drain down the outside pipe and clean that too. Try and do this about once every 2 months.
- Don't stack pot plants, boxes or anything around the external condensor unit that may obstruct the airflow. It won't work as efficiently and will cost you money in the long run.

Heater storage

- Firstly, get rid of that kerosene that youve got left over. The easiest way of doing this is to fill up the heater and leave it running outside the apartment until it stops. DON'T FLUSH IT DOWN THE DRAIN!

Not only is stored kerosene a fire hazard, it only has a shelf life of about 6-12 months under controlled storage conditions.

Bacteria can and does grow in kerosene and other petroleum fuel (this is a big problem in the aviation and shipping industries). It forms into clumps and has the potential to block pipes leading to incomplete combustion.

Incomplete combustion = Carbon Monoxide = Death.
 Once you have drained all the kerosene out of your heater, clean any filters it may have and wrap it up in plastic. Don't forget to remove the batteries. The plastic will prevent insects making a home in it over summer. It will also save you from dispersing that wonderful fragrance named "Odour du Flambé Spider" around you apartment next winter.

Tepco Electricity Charges As of 12/5/03

Basic Monthly Connection Charge

15A Pink C/Breaker	390 yen per month
20A Yellow C/Breaker	520 yen per month
30A Green C/Breaker	780 yen per month

Price per kWh of Electricity (kWh is 1,000 watts for one hour)

0 - 120 kWh	15.58 yen per kWh
121 - 300 kWh	20.67 yen per kWh
301+ kWh	22.43 yen per kWh

Example

I have a 20A (Yellow C/Breaker) connection to the power grid. I use 200kWh per month of electricity.

200kWh x 20.67yen per kWh	= 4,134 yen
Connection charge	= 520 yen +
MONTHLY TOTAL	4,654

**Here's a rough guide as to how much energy different appliances use per hour.
 (assumes they are functioning at full power)**

Air Conditioner	1,000w per hour (1kWh)
Electric Heater	1,000w per hour (1kWh)
Microwave	800w per hour (.8kWh)
T.V	150w per hour (.15kWh)
Laptop	90w per hour (.09kWh)
1 large Fluro Tube	40w per hour (.04kWh)