

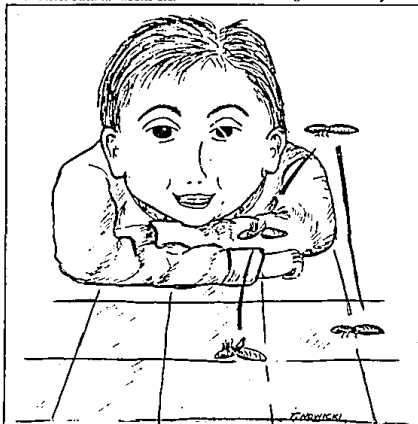
Winter visitor: the click beetle

Few insects bother us in winter. After the first frost of fall, insects are seldom seen.

Their small sizes and body chemistry do not allow them to maintain a warm body in cold air temperatures. In preparation for the winter, adult insects may lay eggs that overwinter. Then the adults die.

Praying mantis egg cases are common on winter weeds in the meadows across from Schoolcraft College in Livonia. They look like a piece of hardened spray foam that looks like an accordion.

SOME INSECTS overwinter in an immature stage of their life cycle.



A youngster can get a laugh, and learn respect for living things, from watching a click beetle pop into the air to right itself.

What to say in nursing home

Dear Jo:

Would you please discuss nursing home etiquette? As a nurse in a small nursing home, we welcome visitors to our units — but sometimes they are at a loss on what to say, or do, while visiting our residents — their relatives and friends.

Mrs. E.C.,
nursing home nurse

Dear Mrs. C.:

Although nursing home visits are considered to be "good medicine" for nursing home residents, the hospital-like setting often leaves the visitors ill at ease.

Simply stated, nursing home etiquette involves common courtesy and good sense — but sometimes, one has to wonder!

So, for the information of your current and potential visitors, here are some general visiting guidelines:

PHONE AHEAD, either to the resident or to the nurses' station, to see

when the best time is for the visit.

After arriving at the nursing home, check with the nurses' station before going to the resident's room. Always knock before entering a resident's room.

While visiting, sit down; communication at eye level is best.

Keep the conversation upbeat; be a good listener.

When appropriate, express your feelings; a sincere hug, a pat on the hand or a kiss can be worth a thousand words.

Let the resident steer the conversation; show interest in his or her health, but don't pry.

DON'T STAY too long; short, regular visits are more pleasant and less tiring.

If the resident is sharing a room, introduce yourself to the roommate the first time you meet; say hello on return visits.

Generally, nursing homes have

nature

Timothy
Nowicki

Dragonfly eggs develop into nymphs that will feed on small aquatic life under water. Depending on the availability of food, they may be under water for more than one winter. When the nymph is ready, it will crawl up a reed stem above the water and transform into an adult dragonfly.

Some insects can overwinter as adults — such as the mourning cloak and tortoise shell butterflies. Even those insects may remain as adults, they seldom are seen.

Except when a warm spell arrives.

THAT WAS when we found a click beetle walking across the kitchen floor. My 2-year-old son found it interesting while it moved along lethargically.

When I got a close look at this three-quarters-inch body with rounded ends, I was able to show the children why they call it "click beetle."

If the insect is turned on its back, it will arch forward, push down a forcibly producing a click sound, and propel itself six inches into the air.

Often the click beetle lands on its feet. Each time one flipped, my son and daughter laughed at the performance.

Certainly not all insects need to be squashed on sight. Parents can use an occasion like this to teach respect for living things.

Homes are not the place for insects, but taking the time to look at and enjoy a living creature before carefully placing it outside teaches a youngster more than the "stomp" reflex.

The writer is staff naturalist at Independence Oaks County Park.

gerontology

A. Jolayne
Farrell



fairly open regulations regarding visiting hours; whatever they are, do your best to comply.

Ask permission before bringing in food.

Keep the number of visitors in your party to three or less; too many at a time are overwhelming.

If you are bringing in children (they can be a real day-brightener), keep an eye on them; shorter visits are best.

TRY TO avoid visiting at meal times.

Stay at home if you are ill; a minor chest infection to you can eventually lead to pneumonia in an older person.

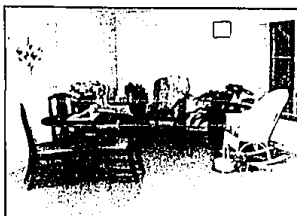
When you can't visit, phone.

Try to bring a little gift to each visit; inexpensive items, such as a single rose, a card or even a bottle of soda are appreciated.

Mrs. C. I hope these few suggestions will be of some help.

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