



CAES

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

Putting Science to Work for Society since 1875

CAES SEMINAR SERIES

“The Maligned Human Bed Bug: A Masterpiece in Adaptation and Survival”

Dr. Gale Ridge

Dept. of Entomology, CAES

As part of this presentation, Dr. Ridge will be joined by Mr. Charles Mastroberti from Quest Pest Control with his dog to display bed bug canine scent detection techniques.

Wednesday, April 12, 2017

12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

Food and coffee will be available at 11:45 a.m.

Jones Auditorium

**The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station
123 Huntington Street, New Haven, CT**

The common bed bug *Cimex lectularius* L. 1758 is a hated insect especially in continents and regions of the world where it had for a period, been extirpated. The bed bug is a supremely adapted ectoparasite and companion of humans with a close association for hundreds of thousands of years. It is possibly one of the most successful species to feed on humans. It has driven numerous cultural behaviors and language. Nearly 100% of cultures worldwide have a unique name for *C. lectularius*. Remarkably little is known about the insect's behavior with most research focused on bed bug control. Robert Usinger, the author of the Cimicid Monograph once wrote, it is “the bug that nobody knows.” This is a fabled success story few are willing to embrace. Years of research has revealed a sophisticated survivor, possessing a remarkable array of tools to thrive with a highly intelligent dangerous host. The bed bug exists in a paradoxical world. It is dependent on us for nutrition, shelter, and distribution while facing certain death if caught. To overcome the insect's innate fear of us has been difficult. We likely contributed to its extreme shyness by providing evolutionary selection pressure against “bold” bed bugs, missing the agoraphobic-like stricken insects for whom we selected.