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Fear of French bedbug invasion

BY **STEPHEN WHITE**

AN infestation of bedbugs in Paris and other French cities has raised fears they could spread to the UK.

Paris City Hall and President Emmanuel Macron's government are calling for action to control the pests before next summer's Paris Olympics.

Jean-Michel Berenger, an entomologist at Marseille's main hospital, said: "Every late summer we see increases in bedbugs because people have been moving about over July and August, and bring them back in their luggage."

"Each year, the seasonal **PEST Bed bug** increase is bigger than the last."

Eurostar said it was on alert and ready to step up "preventive treatment". A statement said: "The textiles on all of our trains are cleaned thoroughly on a regular basis." But David

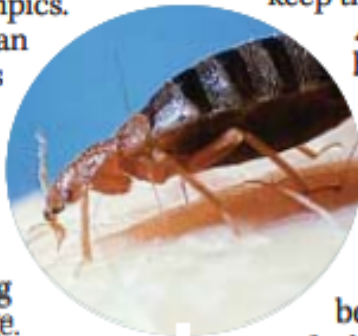
Cain, a microbiologist and founder of Bed Bugs Ltd, warned the problem may already be as great in London.

He said: "They are already on buses, trains, tubes, in cinemas, hospitals. The difference is Parisians are talking about the problem, while Brits are trying to keep the whole thing quiet."

An estimated 5% of London households have had an infestation of bed bugs in the past two years.

Natalie Bungay, of the British Pest Control Association, said: "A lack of travel in Covid meant bed bug issues were few and far between. It's not surprising we're seeing a rise in callouts."

Bed bugs are about 5mm long and look like apple pips. The bites are raised, itchy and often in a line.



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