



Why fur cold storage? Understanding and managing moths in your wardrobe

What are moths and why do they target your clothes?

Moths feed on cashmere, wool, fur, and clothing made from animal hair. When the temperature drops, the molecules slow down and the lower the molecular activity, the slower the biodegradation process. So this fur cold storage is the way to protect your clothes without using mothballs. The main culprit is the fur moth (*Tinea pellionella*). It lays its eggs in natural fibers such as wool, cashmere, silk, and animal hair. It is not the adult moths, but the larvae that feed on the fibers. It is a small, golden-colored moth but has darker wing tips. The larvae are white and feed on natural fibers.

The life cycle of a moth

The life cycle of a moth can vary depending on environmental conditions such as temperature, humidity, and food availability.

From egg to adult moth

The full life cycle of a moth (from egg to adult moth) ranges from about 1 to 3 months under favorable conditions. However, in colder or less favorable conditions, this process can take considerably longer, sometimes up to 6 months or more. An adult moth lays its eggs, about 100 directly on natural fibers. The eggs hatch within 4-10 days, depending on temperature and humidity.

Larvae stage

The larval stage lasts the longest and can range from a few weeks to several months, usually between 1-3 months. During this time, the larvae feed intensively on the fibers, causing damage to clothing.

Pupae stage

When the larvae are ready to pupate, they spin a cocoon of silky thread in which they pupate. This stage usually lasts between 8 and 10 days but can be extended to several weeks in colder temperatures.

Adult moth

After the pupation period, the adult moth emerges from the cocoon. Adult moths usually live for only 15-30 days and mainly focus on mating and laying eggs.

Factors affecting the moth life cycle

Temperature

Warm temperatures speed up the life cycle, while cold temperatures slow it down.

Humidity

High humidity can favor the growth of moth larvae, while low humidity can slow down their development.

Availability of food

The more fiber available for larvae to feed on, the faster they can grow and pupate.

By keeping these factors in mind, you can better understand the life cycle of moths in your clothes and take more effective measures to control and prevent them.

The environment affects moths because the optimum conditions for moths are an environment with a relative humidity of about 70-80% and a temperature between 20-30°C. This ensures optimal growth and reproduction.

Recognizing signs of moths in your clothes

It is also important to recognize warning signs of moths in your clothes to minimize damage.

Signs of moths in clothing

- **Holes in clothing:** Small, irregular holes in garments, especially in dark and quiet places in your closet, are a clear sign of moth larvae feeding on the fibers.
- **Larvae and pupae:** You can see the larvae themselves, which are small white or cream-colored worms. They are usually 1-2 cm long. The cocoons or pupae are silky tubes or flakes attached to the fibers.
- **Adult moths:** The presence of adult moths in your home, especially near your wardrobe, is a warning sign. Clothes moths are small, about 1 cm long, and light yellow or beige in color.
- **Moth droppings:** Small, dark grains that look like sand or fine dust on your clothes or in your closet could be droppings of moth larvae.
- **Silky webs:** Moth larvae can leave silky threads or webs on or between garments.
- **Damaged seams or hems:** Moth larvae tend to hide and feed in seams, hems, or folds of clothes, so check these areas carefully.

Avoid using mothballs and cedar wood with a cold fur storage

When storing your fur coat, it's essential to avoid using mothballs. Although these items are often used to repel moths, they can inadvertently increase humidity levels in your storage area, which can be harmful to your fur coat. Excess moisture can cause the natural oils in the fur to deteriorate and cause the underlying skin to rot, ultimately damaging the coat.

Mothballs and cedarwood also give off strong, distinctive odors that can be absorbed by the fur. The smell of these products is omnipresent and can be very difficult to remove from a fur coat. This lingering odor can detract from the luxurious experience of wearing your fur and may even discourage its use.

To protect your fur coat from moths without risking increased dampness or unpleasant odors, consider using alternative methods. For example, specially designed lavender sachets or fur storage bags can offer protection without the negative side effects associated with mothballs and cedarwood. The best way to store a fur coat is in a fur cold storage and by avoiding mothballs, you can maintain the pristine condition and natural scent of your fur coat.