



# Oklahoma School IPM

## Sowbugs and Pillbugs



Though not dangerous, these creatures can be a nuisance simply by their presence

**Description:** Sowbugs are slightly elongate to



oval with a flattened body (up to 3/4 inch long). Brownish or slate gray, they are wingless and possess

well-developed eyes, seven pairs of legs and overlapping "armored" plates. Sowbugs have two tail-like structures on the rear end and cannot roll up into a ball when disturbed.

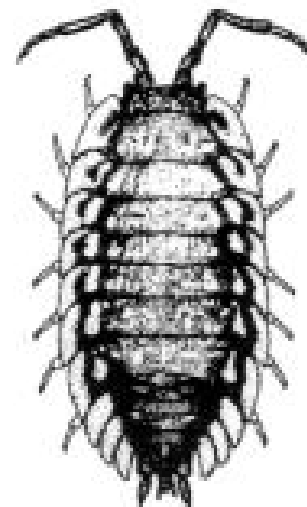
Pillbugs are often referred to as "roly-polies" because of their habit of rolling up into a tight ball when disturbed. They are similar in appearance to a sowbug, but do not have any tail like structures.



**Location:** Sowbugs and pillbugs, live outdoors, but may occasionally enter structures in basements, first floor levels and other damp areas such as around drain pipes, inside bottom cabinets and around baseboards.

**Life Cycle:** Though they mate throughout the year, sowbugs and pillbugs are most active in the spring. The female carries the eggs, numbering from 7 to 200, in a brood pouch on the underside of her body. Eggs hatch in three to seven weeks and the young are

white-colored. They remain in the brood pouch for six to eight weeks until they are able to take care of themselves. There may



Sowbug



Pillbug

be as many as two generations per year, with individuals living up to three years

**Monitoring:** Examine areas where moisture and food sources such as animal droppings, paper, and other decayed organic material may be found

**Cultural Methods:** Because sowbugs and pillbugs require moisture to survive, keeping the building as dry as possible on both the inside and outside will greatly enhance control of this occasional pest.

**Pesticides:** Chemical control of sowbugs and pillbugs is rarely required, however if control is needed, treatments should be applied out by your school's pest management professional



EXTENSION