

HOW TO IDENTIFY A PEST ANT

Note: DPIPWE has also published fact sheets on
Ants, General Information
Pest Ants
Argentine ant

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Argentine ants are about 3 mm long, dark brown (not black or pale brown), do not have a typical ant smell when crushed and march in trails several ants wide. Argentine ant is especially troublesome in food shops, warehouses and processing factories.

While Argentine ant can be an annoying pest in many households, **it is no longer a notifiable pest**. Information about control is available from the [DPIPWE website](#).



Red imported fire ants are 2 to 6 mm long. This variation in size is one distinguishing characteristic. They are coppery-brown in colour on the head and body, with a darker abdomen. The ant mound or nest has no obvious entry or exit holes. When the mound is disturbed, dozens to hundreds of reddish-brown worker ants crawl up the vertical surfaces (grass and other objects) on and around the mound. If you are stung multiple times by small ants, that might be red imported fire ant, so report it straightaway.

There have been no sightings of red imported fire ant in Tasmania. There is an ongoing eradication program in and around Brisbane.

An ant that is sometimes reported on suspicion of being red imported fire ant is the harmless native banded sugar ant. This ant can give a harmless nip but not a painful or dangerous sting. It is 3-4 times the size of RIFA and is orange-brown with a black head and abdomen.



American carpenter ants are occasionally found in western red cedar and oregon timber imported from the USA. So far, fumigation has been successful and these ants have never established in Australia. There are several species of carpenter ants. They range in size from 3.5 to 13 mm and are black or dark brown.

There are large black ants of the genus *Camponotus* that are native to Australia and that nest in rotting house timbers. These are related to but much less damaging than the American carpenter ants that will excavate drier, sounder wood.



Yellow crazy ants are yellow or pale brown in colour and around 4mm. Antennae and legs are remarkably long. It is a significant pest for horticulture and is most commonly spread with shipping cargo. It is regularly detected and eradicated in Queensland. There have been no sightings in Tasmania

If you see what you think might be a notifiable pest ant, phone the pest hotline on 1800 084 881 (all hours).