

# SMALL INVADERS

Odorous House Ants and Pavement Ants

## ODOROUS HOUSE ANTS

1. Single, flat node hidden by abdomen

2. Stepped thoracic dorsum

3. No club

4. Anus slit shaped without a circle of hairs

These ants have a rotten coconut odor when crushed.



## BASIC HABITS

- Queens - multiple
- Workers – monomorphic
- Reproduction - primarily budding
- Prefer to build shallow nests in soil with solid top cover  
will nest in wall voids especially where there is moisture and warmth.
- Treatment with fast acting materials, like pyrethroids, often causes nest to fracture.



## MORE HABITS

- Just because the ants have disappeared, don't assume they are eliminated. Odorous House Ants regularly move their colonies to be closer to exploitable resources.
- Recent research finds that as Fall arrives, colonies often combine for the winter. They will begin to disperse again in the Spring and this is a good time to be looking for activity.
- Occasionally, Odorous House Ants may become active in a structure during Winter. This is a good indication that a colony is located within the structure.
- Since these ants primarily reproduce by budding, it is important to remember that to get to the structure they walked. By the time they reach a structure there can be dozens of nest locations outside waiting for the chance to enter.

## IPM INFORMATION

Exterior inspection is critical to success, too often we respond to interior complaints and forget that problems originate outside.

Look under debris, paving stones, along walkways and driveways, and look for cracks or gaps in pavement or along foundation.

Remember that odorous house ants are strongly attracted to honeydew, always inspect plants for aphids and other honeydew producers.



# IPM PROCEDURES

- Recommend that debris be removed, or at the very least moved away from the structure.
- Rake back mulch from the foundation to view and gain access for treatment.
- Check mulched areas for plastic tarp or fiber weed guards, if the nest location is under this barrier they are protected from treatments.
- Recommend that aphids and honeydew producing insects be treated to reduce this attractive food source.
- Seal entry points and small gaps and/or cracks the ants are using. This is especially helpful on and around counter tops where treatment is difficult.
- Always explain to the customer the importance of sanitation, as well as the importance of not using over the counter sprays which can be detrimental to your treatment program.

# TREATMENT

- Use of baits can be a good, low impact method of treatment, both inside and outside. This can be slow and customers must understand that ants foraging on bait materials should not be disturbed. Use more than one type of bait to see what they most readily take.
- Spray applications can be done with “non-detectable materials”. These materials have a slow action which doesn’t disrupt foraging activities. When foraging activities are disrupted, the ants may respond as if there are no exploitable resources and colonies may split up or fracture into numerous smaller groups.
- Whenever possible look for nesting sites and treat them directly. This uses less material and will be more effective in eliminating colonies around the structure.
- Whatever products you choose, always follow label instructions!

# PAVEMENT ANTS

Two Nodes

Two small spines

Head and thorax grooved

Three segmented club

Stinger present



## BASIC HABITS

Queens – usually single

Workers – monomorphic

Reproduction – flyers

Like to nest under solid objects, leave typical mounds around entrances, but any open hole should be suspected of activity.



## MORE HABITS

During the warmer months pavement ants readily forage both indoors and outside. During the winter they will often move deep under slab foundations, often showing up in the middle of buildings.

Pavement ants exhibit cryptobiotic behavior, that is they try to hid their movements. Emerging from cracks in the slab they often trail under baseboards or along tack strips to emerge close to resources.

Often they are emerging from the base of door frames. This is a good place to start your inspection.



# IPM PROCEDURES

- Inspect thoroughly, both inside and outside during the warmer months, and concentrate on the interior during colder months. Inside try to locate entry points and travel paths. Often wall voids are treated without success where ants are seen emerging from under a baseboard. Be sure to know what is really going on before treating.
- Treat entry points and seal with caulking. Over time this will limit the ants ability to gain access up into the structure.
- Outside inspect for openings in cracks, joints, and along the edges of concrete walks and drives. Mounds are not always present, but cracks and holes will quickly fill up with dirt. If there is an opening it's a good bet that it is being used.

# TREATMENTS

- Treatment with baits can work well, but at times may be ignored by pavement ants. Use multiple baits to see which one they will take.
- Locating entry holes inside and treating and sealing can be effective. Exposed foragers can be vacuumed up.
- Outside treat both active and seemingly inactive holes and cracks. This often works much more effectively than perimeter sprays and reduces material usage.
- Use of “non-detectable” slow acting materials, especially those that will transfer between ants can be highly effective.
- Remember, always read and follow the product label for any pesticide!

## BY THE WAY

At times when under heated slabs pavement ants will release alates, sometimes as early as January or February into a structure. This usually creates a severe nuisance for people. It is highly unlikely that these reproductives will find a suitable site to establish a nest. These ants can be removed with a vacuum, and if the entry point can be found it can be directly treated and sealed.

# THANK YOU

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