



Bull ant (*Myrmecia* sp.) (above) and bull ant nest (below)

## Bull ants (*Myrmecia* sp.)

### Ants to watch out for

Red imported fire ants, yellow crazy ants, electric ants and carpenter ants, all pose a serious social, economic and environmental threat to Western Australia. If you suspect you have these ants or any ants you haven't seen before, please contact us on freecall 1800 084 881.

### Summary

Bull ants (*Myrmecia* sp.), also known as sergeant ants or inch ants, are native to Australia and are common and widespread. These ants don't usually cause problems, but can give a painful sting if disturbed.

### Where are they found?

Bull ants are found in natural and urban areas, they nest underground and the entrance holes are usually obvious. Ants will forage for nectar as well as insect and animal prey to carry back to the nest.

### Damage

These ants do not damage or nest in buildings, but can be a nuisance due of their aggressive territorial behaviour and painful sting.

### Treatment

Control, if necessary should be aimed at the nest site. Any insecticide sprays or dusts registered for ant control can be used to treat the nests and administered carefully down the nest entrance hole. These products can be purchased from garden centres, hardware stores and agricultural chemical retailers.

### Contact

Pest and Disease Information Service  
(PaDIS)

Call: (08) 9368 3080

Email: [padis@dprid.wa.gov.au](mailto:padis@dprid.wa.gov.au)



## Exotic threats

The following exotic ants could impact on our outdoor lifestyle and Western Australia's agricultural and food industries.

**Carpenter ants**: Elsewhere in the world there are *Camponotus* species that are pests of timber and like termites, if left unchecked can cause extensive damage to structural timber and furniture.

**Red imported fire ants** (*Solenopsis invicta*): One of the most serious ant pests in the world. These ants are aggressive, particularly near the nest and inflict a painful sting. They are present in south east Queensland and they could accidentally be imported into Western Australia.

**Electric ants** (*Wasmannia auropunctata*): One of the world's worst invasive species, with a painful sting that will impact on outdoor lifestyle, the environment and agricultural industries. These ants are currently in northern Queensland and eradication efforts are underway.

**Yellow crazy ants** (*Anoplolepis gracilipes*): Ability to spray formic acid which causes burning and irritates the skin and eyes of animals and humans. Found in the Pacific region and on Christmas Island, this ant has also spread extensively since arriving in Queensland.

Under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* (BAM Act) administered by the Department of Agriculture and Food, the introduction of these ants into Western Australia is prohibited and control measures must be taken to prevent them entering and establishing in the State.

If you think you have seen any of the above ant species please call the Pest and Disease Information Service on 1800 084 881.

Black carpenter ant (*Camponotus pennsylvanicus*) (photo: PaDIL), red imported fire ant, electric ant (photo: PaDIL), yellow crazy ant (photo: PaDIL)

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