

INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT!

ARGENTINE ANT

(*Linepithema humile*)

NATIVE RANGE

As the name suggests, this species is native to Argentina, along with Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

DESCRIPTION

Argentine Ants...

- Are small in size (workers 2-3 mm, queens 4.5-5 mm)
- Can form thick lines of ants when foraging
- Collect in large numbers at food sources
- Have a smooth and shiny body that lacks hairs
- Are not able to sting

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Argentine Ants...

- Can out-compete native ant species for food and habitat
- Cost home and building owners money and time to remove
- Spread rapidly due to super-colonies that are formed over large distances
- Impact agricultural crops and gardens by increasing aphid populations

BIOLOGY & SPREAD

Argentine Ants form colonies that feed and reproduce as a group. Colonies disperse by budding (individuals leave and form a new colony). It is a concern that Argentine Ants could be moved around in products like plants, soil and wood.

HABITAT

Argentine Ants nest in a variety of locations (top soil, under debris, or within manmade structures). They prefer moist areas and warm temperatures, and as a result could establish in B.C.'s South Coast, in urban environments that provide refuge during colder seasons.

REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES

www.reportinvasives.ca



Photo Credit: Sean McCann

PRIMARY IMPACT:

Argentine ants invade homes and buildings in large numbers and can out-compete native ant species.

Photo Credit: Thmazing, Wikimedia Commons



DID YOU KNOW?

Argentine Ants have been found to create colonies spreading 1,000 kilometers in length. That is roughly equal to travelling from Victoria to Calgary!

ARGENTINE ANT (*Linepithema humile*)

LOOKALIKES

There are three native *Dolichoderinae* ant species in B.C. that are difficult to tell apart from Argentine Ants, specifically the House Ant (*Tapinoma sessile*). Argentine Ants in comparison to House Ants are lighter in colour, and often present in much greater numbers at food sources. Refer to a professional for clear identification (Contact information below).

ARE THEY HERE YET?

Yes. Argentine Ants are present in Victoria B.C., but have not been detected in other regions within Canada.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I FIND ONE?

First, confirm what you are looking at, as it is difficult to distinguish Argentine Ants from native ant species. For identification, mail specimens to experts at the Royal B.C. Museum or to Dr. Robert Higgins of Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops.

Location 1: Dr. Rob Higgins, Department of Biological Sciences, Thompson Rivers University, 900 McGill Road, Kamloops, BC, V2C 0C8

Location 2: Attn: Claudia Copley, Natural History Section, Entomology Department, Royal BC Museum, 675 Belleville St, Victoria, BC, V8X 9W2

Report Argentine Ants, or any other invasive species via the Report Invasives phone app, or via the webform on the B.C. Inter-Ministry Invasive Species Working Group website via this link :www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species

HOW CAN WE STOP THEM?

- Do not possess, breed, release, sell or transport live Argentine Ants in B.C.
- Check for stowaways on transferred materials
- Raise awareness to avoid the spread of this species into B.C. waters

Removal

- Use insecticidal baits registered for use in Canada
- Contact local pest control if becomes unmanageable



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