



What Is The “Caribbean Crazy Ant”?

The common name used most often is the “Caribbean crazy ant”. However, in Texas, more specifically in the Houston area, the common name often referenced is the “crazy raspberry ant”.



These ants have become a serious nuisance in parts of Houston, where the infestation was calculated at approximately 50 million ants per acre in June of 2008. This Caribbean invader has been known to short out many different types of electrical apparatuses, and in some cases has caused several thousand dollars in damage and remedial costs. In areas of serious infestation, it has become uncomfortable for residents to enjoy time in their yards and companion animals may avoid the outdoors as well.

These ants do not have stingers. In place of a stinger, is an acidopore, which can excrete chemicals for defense or attack. These ants, will however, bite. This behavior seems to be rare, but in some cases their bite will cause a relatively sharp but quickly fading pain.

Research studies and anecdotal observations currently indicate that the ant has high reproductive rates, broad habitat (from urban dwellings to swamp lands) and feeding requirements, and is readily transported. They are believed to attack ground nesting birds as well as pets and livestock. They have also been observed to outcompete native and other introduced ants (including the red imported fire ant).



Where Are They Found?

This non-native species has only been known in the state of Texas since 2002. Since that time, remarkable numbers can be found in several different locations in the surrounding area of southeast Houston, including Pasadena, Deer Park, Friendswood, San Jacinto Port, Pearland, Seabrook and La Porte. It is suspected that the spread of this ant will undoubtedly reach well beyond the Houston area.



What Are The Treatment Options?

Many of the typical control tactics for other ants do not provide adequate control of this species. They are not attracted to most bait products and the one known product they are attracted to does not offer enough control.

Recently, the **Termidor** SC Crisis Exemption use to control crazy ants was granted to the Texas Department of Agriculture by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) according to Section 18 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act in designated counties of Texas. This exemption became effective June 30, 2008, and will remain in effect until the EPA makes a decision on the Section 18 specific exemption submitted through the Texas Department of Agriculture.

Termidor SC, under the directions for use of the Crisis Exemption, can only be applied by applicators certified by the Texas Department of Agriculture in the appropriate categories. The Crisis Exemption Section 18 label can be used to treat for crazy ants in the following counties: Brazoria, Galveston, Harris, Jefferson, Liberty, Montgomery and Wharton.

For more information please visit www.antinstitute.com, www.termidorhome.com, or www.pestcontrolfacts.org.

