



Our Insect Enemies



Ants Don't Need Invitations To Feast At Your Next Picnic

(NAPSA)—Summer brings warm weather, which creates the ideal conditions for pool parties, picnics, and, unfortunately, ants. When our focus should be on family vacations and bathing suits, our attention shifts to protecting our family, home and yard from these menacing pests.

Ants can be found anywhere because they adapt easily to changing environments, food sources and nesting sites. They have been around for over 100 million years and it is estimated that there are close to 20,000 different ant species. Their resilience explains why ant infestations have become such a nuisance, especially during spring and summer months when they are the most active and spend the most time above ground.

Ants invade our homes, kitchens, and backyards—environments we consider ours. In some cases, ants deplete resources that we need. Carpenter ants, for example, consider the wood in our home fair game as a food source as well as their home nests. And some ants have an aggressive sting they impart when their territory is invaded. Fire ants, named because of their aggressive behavior and the burning sensation a victim will feel when stung, are rapidly spreading across the United States.

Fire Ants: The Worst Menace

First introduced to the United States in the 1930s, red imported fire ants have had a substantial impact on people, animals and agriculture and are powerfully spreading across the United States. They currently infest 18 states and can be found in backyards, golf courses, parks and even outdoor electrical equipment, such as power transformers and air-conditioning units. Fire ants have become not only a nuisance, but also a serious health risk, attacking anything that disturbs their environment.

Measuring anywhere from 1/16- to 1/4-inch long, these predators are reddish-brown in color and



Fire ants are a growing problem nationwide. Using the right product can help protect you and your home.

build nests anywhere they can find moisture. They produce mounds of soft, crumbly soil that house their colonies and when disturbed, they surge out of the mound, swarming their victim and stinging repeatedly. Their venom is unique in comparison to other insects because of the high amount of toxins it contains, which causes the extreme burning sensation at the site of the sting and blisters that can last for several days.

As with any ant species, it is necessary to kill the queen ant to successfully wipe out the colony. What makes fire ants such a nuisance to control is that they have multiple queens, making eradication difficult and in some cases, expensive. There are, however, consumer products available at your local retailer, like Spectracide® Fire Ant Killer granules, which quickly kill entire fire ant colonies within 24 hours. Granules are spread directly onto the mound then gently watered in with a gallon of water. The active ingredient is then carried into the mound by the water, killing the queen and the entire colony within 24 hours. As with any insecticide, be sure to read and follow all of the manufacturer's directions for use, as printed on the product.

For more information to protect your family and home from fire ants, visit www.spectrumbrands.com or call 1-800-332-5553.