

GARDEN ANTS

LASIUS NIGER

A quick ID for the Garden, or Black Ant.

If in doubt, contact a trained and professional Pest Technician.



DESCRIPTION

Adults will form three primary castes:

1. Queens - reproductive female
2. Workers - Non-reproductive females
3. Drones - Reproductive Males

Characteristics:

- Queens winged at first, 12mm long.
- Workers are dark brown/black, 3-5mm long.
- Workers have a single node on their pedicel.

DEVELOPMENT

Egg	The formation of a colony starts with a mated winged female ant digging into the earth to produce a smart cell where she lays a large number of eggs.
Larva	Legless grubs fed by workers, and full grown in about three weeks
Pupa	The larvae mature and pupate within the cell. They develop within two weeks and are guarded by workers.
Adult	Emerge after two weeks. Workers are dark brown/black and 3-5mm in length.

DIET

- Ants will eat various foods and are most attracted to sweet substances.
- One successful forager can communicate the information to co-workers leading to vast numbers invading food sources.

POTENTIAL ISSUES

- **Food Contamination:** Ants can carry bacteria and contaminate food.
- **Damage to Property:** Carpenter ants can damage wooden structures by hollowing them out for nests.

SIGNS OF INFESTATION

- Winged and sexually mature ants will emerge in large numbers over a short period.
- Seeing workers in domestic kitchens following the same trails.

CONTROL

Sealing obvious faults in structures: Garden ants are an external species but will move indoors if food presents itself. Control measures are generally only required where ants are penetrating, or living in, building structures. The first action should be sealing these points using mortar or mastic.

Dust or Spray Formulations: Only apply dust formulations as a professional internally into voids.

Bait Formulations: Bait for garden ants are only available for professionals. Formulations are the most effective control as they utilize the animals' trophallaxis behaviour, resulting in a full nest kill. This may have a delayed action against ants as will require workers to transport it into the nest.

Aerosols: Many household insecticides are cleared for use against crawling insects. Their use is likely to only offer short-term control and will not work for nest control, they can be used internally to suppress or eliminate swarming behaviour.