

RED IMPORTED FIRE ANT

INFO SHEET

FAST FACTS

- There are more than 12,000 species of ants all over the world.
- An ant can lift 20 times its own body weight.
- When **foraging** ants leave a **pheromone** trail, so that they know where they've been.
- Some queen ants can live for many years and have *millions* of babies!
- Ants don't have ears. Ants "hear" by feeling vibrations in the ground through their feet.
- Ants don't have lungs. They breath through tiny holes all over their body.
- When ants fight, it is usually to the death!
- When the queen of the colony dies, the colony can only survive a few months.

General Information

Red Imported Fire Ants are more aggressive than other ant species and have a painful sting. These ants and their telltale mound nests should be actively avoided.

Cool fact: Red Imported Fire Ants can adapt to many climates and conditions in and around their environment. For example, if the colony senses increased water levels in their nests, they will come together and form a huge ball or raft that is able to float on the water!

Size: 5/8"	Common Name: Red Imported Fire Ant
Shape: Segmented, Oval	Kingdom: Animalia
Color: Dark Reddish Brown	Phylum: Arthropoda
Legs: 6	Class: Insecta
Wings: Varies	Order: Hymenoptera
Antenna: Yes	Family: Formicidae
	Genus Species: Solenopsis invicta

Diet

Red Imported Fire Ants primarily feed on vegetation.

Habitat

Red imported fire ants will build their nests in mounds of soil outdoors, in landscape areas or near a building's foundation. They occasionally enter buildings through holes or cracks in walls and foundations.

Impact

The sting of a Red Imported Fire Ant is painful and often results in a raised welt that becomes a white blister. Persons allergic to insect stings will react more severely. They are frustrating, not only because of the physical pain they can inflict, but because their mound-building activity can damage plant roots and lead to loss of crops.

See other side for suggestion on preventing this pest.



RED IMPORTED FIRE ANT

INFO SHEET

Prevention

- Eliminate standing water. Pests, such as ants, mosquitoes and termites, are attracted to moisture.
- Keep tree branches and other plants cut back from the house. Sometimes pests use these branches to get into your home.
- Make sure that there are no cracks or little openings around the bottom of your house. Sometimes pests use these to get into your home.
- Make sure that firewood and building materials are not stored next to your home. Pests like to build nests in stacks of wood.

To learn more about this and other ants, visit <http://www.pestworldforkids.org/ants.html>