

Fact Sheet #10 – Black House Ant



Ochetellus glaber

Description

An intensely black small biting ant that often has a blue-green iridescence. It grows to about 3mm and can live in large colonies. Notably they have bent antennae, which differentiates them from termites. They are nuisances, mostly accumulating in large numbers around unprotected foodstuffs.

Habitat

Commonly found around cone shaped sand piles in pavements, lawn edges and gardens. Often nests within structures and enters through small openings in window frames, doors and cracks. Attracted to sugar containing foods but will eat fat and protein based foods. The Black House Ant is a common pest throughout many parts of Australia and is most active in summer.

Biology

From typically small oval eggs, larvae hatch and are fed by adults. The larvae pupate and adults emerge to harden and darken over hours to days. Many factors such as food, temperature, and time of year affect the lifecycle times. This ant has a strong odour when crushed.

What you can do to limit infestation:

- Remove and rinse out all food soiled containers before disposal.
- Thoroughly clean all surfaces, particularly for sugar containing products.
- Tightly seal containers.
- Clean pet areas and use water moats around pet food.
- Keep areas dry – eliminate standing water, fix leaking taps, increase ventilation.
- Elevate plant pots and eradicate aphids.
- Flexible seal concrete paving joints.
- Fill joints, cracks, crevices & electrical pipe conduit entry points.
- Weather strip doors.
- Remove trees and shrubs from touching the house and remove rotting wood.
- Don't stack objects against the house.
- Increase the depth of landscape mulch.







If you get an infestation:

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