

## Field Ants



Field ant worker (Ken Gray  
Collection)



Winged field ant (Ken Gray  
Collection)



Field ant worker (J. Berger/IPM  
Images)

**Typical Location When Observed:** Field ants often enter homes in search of food in the spring.

**Importance/Damage:** Field ants are considered a nuisance in the home.

**Distinguishing Features:** Field ants are medium size (3/16 to 1/3 inch) and black or reddish brown and black in color. They are smaller than carpenter ants and lack the smoothly rounded thorax characteristic of carpenter ants.

**Look-Alikes:** Carpenter ants, termites

**General Life History and Habits:** Field ants are among the most common ants found in yards and gardens. They nest outdoors in loose soil and some produce mounds that incorporate twigs, dried leaves and other plant materials. Migrations into homes occur in spring when soils warm enough to cause colonies to resume activity but cool temperatures prevent normal foraging in yards. Field ants feed on a variety of foods but most often are observed visiting honeydew excreted by aphids or other sweet materials.

**Resources:** More information may be found in Extension Fact Sheets 5.518, *Ants in the Home*, and 5.554, *Carpenter Ants*.

**Scientific Name:** *Formica* species

**Order:** Hymenoptera (ants, bees, sawflies, wasps)

**Family:** Formicidae (ants)

Actual Length  
—

**Version:** July 30, 2009