

ANTS

Problems They Cause

Black ants forage for a variety of foods, but they are not particularly associated with unhygienic places so they are primarily a nuisance rather than a risk to human health.

However, they can walk over microbe contaminated surfaces during their foraging, and this leads to black ants invading buildings being considered unacceptable. Pharaoh ants infest warm buildings like hospitals; they are tiny and can penetrate dressings spreading infections as they go.

Commercial Control Methods

- Identify the species of ants
- Determine the extent and source of the infestation
- Depending on species, place insecticidal gel bait in the infested areas
- The toxic baits are slow-acting, so the ants can eat some and take some back to the nest before dying themselves. There is likely to be an initial increase in activity as they find and exploit the new food source. It is fed to the young in the nest, so it gradually kills the whole colony.

What you can do to help

- Ensure good housekeeping in food areas
- Store foodstuffs in sealed containers
- Ensure spillages are cleaned up without delay
- Empty and clean bins regularly

Pest Biology

There are many different species, each with their own habitat and food preferences such as:

Black Garden Ants: 3-5mm long and dark brown/black in colour. Black Garden Ants nests are normally found in gardens; in the ground, under rocks or flagstones and can often penetrate under the building. They frequently build nests in the foundation layer and from there penetrate into buildings through cracks and crevasses.

Pharaoh Ants: 2mm long and light yellow to reddish brown in colour. They live in colonies with nests in concealed places, often close to a water and food source. Colonies can number 50,000 workers and 100,000 immature ants.

They prefer to feed from foods with high protein content, particularly blood and can actively feed from wounds and soiled dressings. These ants can spread pathogens between people due to their liking for blood and have to be specially treated. If they are treated with normal spray insecticide the number of nests will only increase!



Pharaoh Ant



Black Garden Ant

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Terminix is a member of the British Pest Control Association (BPCA).

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