



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

Digital Library

Biosecurity factsheets

Biosecurity

11-2024

Yellow crazy ant

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Western Australia

Follow this and additional works at: https://library.dpird.wa.gov.au/bs_factsheets



Part of the [Agricultural Education Commons](#), [Agricultural Science Commons](#), [Agronomy and Crop Sciences Commons](#), [Biosecurity Commons](#), [Entomology Commons](#), [Environmental Health and Protection Commons](#), [Environmental Indicators and Impact Assessment Commons](#), [Environmental Monitoring Commons](#), [Natural Resources Management and Policy Commons](#), and the [Sustainability Commons](#)

This factsheet is brought to you for free and open access by the Biosecurity at Digital Library. It has been accepted for inclusion in Biosecurity factsheets by an authorized administrator of Digital Library. For more information, please contact library@dpird.wa.gov.au.

Yellow crazy ant

DPIRD-174

Yellow crazy ants (*Anoplolepis gracilipes*) are believed to be native to west Africa or Asia. They are not present in Western Australia (WA) and are prohibited.

Yellow crazy ants were first observed in Australia in the early 1900's on the Cocos-Keeling Islands and Christmas Island, where they have now caused a massive decline in the population of iconic red crabs. More recently, they have been recorded in Queensland, the Northern Territory (NT), and New South Wales (NSW).



Image 1: Yellow crazy ant

Report suspected yellow crazy ants

Use our MyPestGuide Reporter app, available on the website (dpiird.wa.gov.au), or contact our Pest and Disease Information Service (PaDIS) on +61 8 9368 3080 or email padis@dpiird.wa.gov.au.

Potential impact

Yellow crazy ants:

- Can form super-colonies with large populations.
- Can spray formic acid on competitors and prey — this may cause burning of the skin and eyes of animals and humans.
- Are highly invasive and capable of disrupting agriculture and natural ecosystems.
- Are aggressive to invertebrates and vertebrates.
- Eat a wide range of foods, preying mostly on insects, but also on slow moving crabs, snails, small reptiles, and nestling birds. They are notorious for farming honeydew-producing insects, such as scale, aphids, and mealy bugs.

What to look for

- Yellow-brown coloured ants with a darker, sometimes stripy abdomen.
- About 5 mm in length with a slender body, and very long legs and antennae.
- Run about erratically when disturbed.
- Large, interconnected nests, sometimes containing millions of ants.
- High numbers of ants on the ground and climbing tree trunks.

Where to look

- Large nests in various locations, including holes in the ground, under rocks, logs, debris, mulch and leaf litter, and at the base of trees.
- Moist, leafy, and shady disturbed habitats, including rainforest and agricultural land, and harsh dry, rocky areas.



Image 2: Yellow crazy ants spray a formic acid that is painful to eyes and skin

Report yellow crazy ants

Yellow crazy ants are a reportable pest in WA.

It can be difficult to identify an invasive ant from a common ant species due to their small size, so report any unfamiliar ants to the Pest and Disease Information Service (PaDIS) by calling +61 8 9368 3080 or email padis@dpird.wa.gov.au. Otherwise, use our MyPestGuide Reporter app, available on the website at dpird.wa.gov.au.

Treatment

Do not treat suspected yellow crazy ants. The department will undertake early identification and appropriate control of confirmed yellow crazy ants, free of charge.

More information

Refer to the department website at dpird.wa.gov.au for more information about the following:

- Invasive ants
- Pest ants
- Control methods

Contact us

Pest and Disease Information Service (PaDIS)

+61 8 9368 3080 | Email PaDIS (padis@dpird.wa.gov.au)

Last updated November 2024

Important Disclaimer

The Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development and the State of Western Australia accept no liability whatsoever by reason of negligence or otherwise arising from the use or release of this information or any part of it.

Copyright © State of Western Australia (Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development) 2024.

dpird.wa.gov.au