

Carpenter Ant

Description: Carpenter ants are general insect predators that are large ($\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long) and usually black or cinnamon, but can be bicolored. The queen ant and winged ants are larger (up to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch long). Their oval, cream-colored eggs are about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch long. Larvae are legless and grub-like.

Benefit/Damage: Carpenter ants are general predators and they protect aphids and mealybugs for their honeydew. They also bore through wood to make nests. They are most active at night. Unlike termites, they do not feed on wood and the wood damaged by them will not contain mud-like material. They eject sawdust-like debris (frass) from their tunnels.

Management: Find and destroy the nests. Treat wall voids and other hidden places where ants are entering by carefully drilling a series of small holes and puffing boric acid or other registered products into the suspected nest areas. If the nest is in a wall, drill and treat at least three to six feet on either side of where the ants are entering so as to maximize the chance of contacting the nest. Also treat behind pipe collars and behind the junction box for electrical switches. Moist wood provides the ideal environment for carpenter ants, so correct any moisture problems and remove water-damaged wood.

Carpenter ants are usually black and about $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long (below).



Boring dust is left near wood damaged by carpenter ants (above).