

# URBAN PEST NEWS

## Do you KNOW your termites? Swarmers wings



**Subterranean/ formosan\***

2 heavy veins on  
front edge of wing

\*formosans have hair on wings



**Drywood**

3 heavy veins on  
front edge of wing  
crossveins

## Soldiers/ head capsules



**Formosan**

oval shape  
mandibles often  
cross



**Subterranean**

square shape  
mandibles without  
teeth



**Drywood**

square shape  
mandibles  
with teeth

## DryWood Termites

Drywood termites are found in various parts of Texas, with higher concentrations along coastal areas.

Drywood termites, unlike their close relatives subterranean termites, do not require wood to soil contact to survive. Drywood termites live in sound, dry wood above ground level and can obtain moisture they need to survive from wood they consume.

Drywood termites are identified using alates, also known as swarmers or reproductives, or soldiers. Wings from reproductive drywood termites have 3 heavy veins on the leading edge of the wing and

cross veins between the heavy veins. Soldiers have squarish heads and large mandibles with teeth.

People often find swarmers inside their homes. When inspecting homes for drywood termites, look in window sills, cobwebs and lights for presence of swarmers or their wings. Also look for small kickout holes in wood objects or structural timbers. Wood with holes can be tapped gently with a screwdriver handle while holding a piece of paper underneath the hole to catch any pellets. Drywood pellets, small, six sided frass which are blunt on one end, will often fall out of infested wood.

Drywood termites eat soft springwood as well as harder summerwood. The galleries often have a smooth, sculptured appearance and often contain fecal pellets described above.

Treatment options for drywood termites include:

- Replacing infested wood (for small or localized infested areas)- use kiln dried or chemically treated wood if possible
- Pesticide injection- can be difficult to locate & treat all infested areas within the structure
- Boron salt treatments- will not kill drywood termites already within structural timbers; prevents drywood termites from infesting new timber & spreading through the structure
- Use of heat or cold- lower center of wood temperature to -15 degrees or raise center of wood temperature to 135 degrees & hold for 60 minutes
- Chemical fumigation- most effective treatment; cover structure with tarps and inject toxic gas; may require several days



# COMMUNITY Wide Fire ANT Management

Community wide fire ant management programs can be a way to tilt the advantage in the homeowners favor in the battle against fire ants. Community wide management programs can also be an excellent marketing tool for pest control companies. By providing fire ant management for entire neighborhoods, you can show that you are capable of providing results in pest management situations to a large pool of potential customers.

When fire ant control methods are executed by individual landowners, there can be rapid reinfestation from nearby, untreated areas. With community wide programs, reinfestation boundaries are pushed further away, resulting in longer periods of time between reinvasion and treatment.

A general program could consist of broadcast baiting spring and fall in front yards and common areas. Homeowners could be responsible for baiting in their own backyard. The program could also provide individual spot treatments of mounds that pop up between broadcast baiting periods or this could be left up to the homeowners.

Homeowners should be offered an option to not have their yard baited; some people do not want chemical used on their property. Compile a "no bait" list and skip treating in those areas.

See the following publication for more information:  
[http://fireant.tamu.edu/materials/factsheets\\_pubs/pdf/fapfs002\\_2002rev.pdf](http://fireant.tamu.edu/materials/factsheets_pubs/pdf/fapfs002_2002rev.pdf)



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# FLEAS

The cat flea is often a problem in homes that have pets, but it may also become a problem for those who are not pet owners. In this case, wildlife is often the culprit for carrying fleas into the structure.

Adult female fleas require a blood meal to produce eggs. Eggs are laid on a host, in this case usually a pet, but can fall off or be shaken off. The larvae often develop in carpeting or pet bedding where there is a build up of organic matter on which they feed. The entire life cycle usually takes 3-4 weeks.

Indoors treatments should target areas where pets like to rest such as beds (either the pet's or the owner's), furniture, rugs, etc. Outside treatments should also target areas where pets rest, but should avoid areas that get full sun for most of the day. Fleas prefer humid, shaded areas. Areas outside could include flower beds, under shrubs, under decks or in cracks of sidewalks.

If homeowners have pets with a flea problem, encourage them to have their pet treated as part of a flea management program.



Cat flea  
image by Roger Meola

## Tips For Your Customers

- Vacuum several times a week, getting along baseboards & under furniture
  - discard vacuum bag in outside garbage can so fleas do not hatch out & re-enter home
- Wash pet bedding in hot water
- Bathe/ groom pet & get it on a flea treatment
- Screen vents in the attic to exclude wildlife that can bring fleas into the home

For more information, contact:

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