

TOWNSVILLE YELLOW CRAZY ANTS



GENERAL FACT SHEET

Yellow Crazy Ants (*Anoplolepis gracilipes*) are listed among the *100 worst invasive species globally* and pose a threat to our environment, economy and lifestyle.

WHERE ARE THEY?

Yellow Crazy Ant infestations have been detected in the following suburbs across the Townsville region:

- Alice River
- Alligator Creek
- Black River
- Brookhill
- Douglas
- Garbutt
- Julago
- Mount Stuart
- Oak Valley
- Roseneath
- Stuart
- Wulguru
- Annandale (historical)
- Mount Saint John (historical)
- Nome (historical)

Residents and businesses in these areas should remain vigilant and check their properties for signs of infestation.

WHY ARE THEY A PROBLEM?

- Form **supercolonies** with multiple queens, sometimes covering hundreds of hectares.
- Aggressive hunters that attack native species, disrupt ecosystems, and cause biodiversity loss.
- Spray formic acid instead of stinging—this can cause severe irritation to skin and eyes and may blind or kill small animals.
- Heavy infestations can invade homes and gardens, damaging electrical infrastructure and making outdoor spaces unusable for people and pets.

YOUR GENERAL BIOSECURITY OBLIGATION (GBO)

The management of yellow crazy ants is a shared responsibility. Every person has an obligation under the *Biosecurity Act 2014* to take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent the distribution of yellow crazy ants.

Important Legal Notice: Under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*, it is an offence to obstruct or interfere with any authorised treatment or control measures targeting yellow crazy ants. These invasive pests pose a significant biosecurity risk, and strict prevention and control programs are in place to manage their spread. Individuals must not impede authorised officers or hinder any activities carried out under these programs. Failure to comply with directions or obstructing treatment efforts can result in legal penalties.

What this means for you:

- The GBO applies to everyone including landowners, tenants, business owners, employees and contractors.
- Yellow crazy ants are classed as Category 3 Restricted Matter. They must not be moved, given away or sold.
- Ensure soil, plants, and goods moved from infested areas are clean and free of ants.

Failure to meet your obligations is an offence under the Act.

TREATMENT

Best Practice: TYCAMP will use insecticide baits such as ANTOFF® that worker ants carry back to the nest, feeding queens and larvae, which eventually kills the colony.

- Infestations often need repeated treatments over several years to ensure queens are eliminated.

Aerial Treatment: Helicopter and drone applications are used for large rural, forested, and agricultural areas.

Ground Treatment: Handheld spreaders and blowers are used in smaller residential, riparian, and urban areas.

- Local pest control operators can be engaged to help in the treatment of yellow crazy ants around infrastructure such as houses, as they have access to registered chemicals designed to treat invasive ants.

DID YOU KNOW?

On Christmas Island, yellow crazy ants caused an “ecological meltdown,” wiping out millions of native red crabs and disrupting the entire ecosystem.

For more information

☎ 13 48 10

✉ enquiries@townsville.qld.gov.au

🌐 townsville.qld.gov.au/yellowcrazyants



Australian Government

Department of Climate Change, Energy,
the Environment and Water



Queensland Government



DISTINGUISHING YELLOW CRAZY ANTS FROM SIMILAR SPECIES

Yellow Crazy Ant

Anoplolepis Gracilipes:

- Very long legs and antennae
- Frantic movement when disturbed
- Slender golden body, brown abdomen
- Sprays acid, doesn't bite



Tyrant Ant

Iridomyrmex spp:

- Shorter legs and antennae
- Similar colour and look to Yellow Crazy Ant
- Distinct odour when crushed



Meat Ant

Iridomyrmex spp:

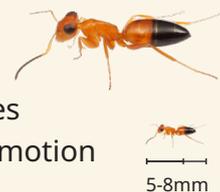
- Shorter antennae and legs
- Large square head
- Bites but does not spray acid



Strobe Ant

Opisthopsis spp:

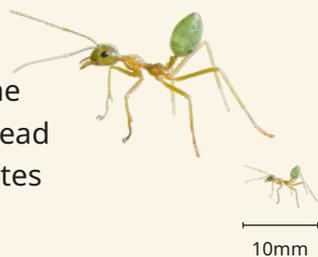
- Shorter legs and antennae
- Large abdomen, head and eyes
- Moves in a stop-start (strobe) motion



Green Tree Ant

Oecophylla smaragdina:

- Long legs and antennae
- Green abdomen and head
- Sprays acid and also bites



Carpenter Ant

Camponotus spp:

- Short legs and antennae
- Large stocky body, often golden or brown



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