

# Argentine Ants

## QUICK STATS:



**Color:**

Light to dark brown and shiny



**Shape:**

Segmented; oval



**Size:**

$\frac{1}{16}$  –  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch long



**Region:**

Found mostly in the southern U.S., California and Hawaii



# Argentine Ants



## *Linepithema humile*

### OVERVIEW:

Argentine ant colonies can grow to monumental size. A single colony can contain several hundred thousand workers, with the colony borders sometimes covering entire habitats. Worker Argentine ants are about  $\frac{1}{16}$  of an inch long. Queen Argentine ants are  $\frac{1}{8}$  of an inch to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch long.

### HABITS:

Argentine ants prefer to eat sweets such as honeydew, but they will eat almost anything including meats, eggs, oils and fats. Their colonies are usually found in wet environments near a food source. Outdoors, they usually build shallow nests under boards or stones, beneath plants or alongside sidewalks. When conditions in their natural environment are either too wet or too dry, Argentine ants may seek shelter indoors, where they often nest near water pipes, sinks or potted plants.

### THREATS:

Argentine ants do not pose a health threat, but they can contaminate food and should be avoided.

### PREVENTION:

- Eliminate any standing water on your property. Argentine ants are attracted to moisture.
- Keep tree branches and other plants cut back from the house. These can provide “pest highways” into your home.
- Seal any cracks or openings around the exterior of your house, especially where utility pipes and electrical lines enter.
- Make sure that firewood and building materials are not stored next to your home. Argentine ants like to build nests in moist wood.
- If you suspect you have an Argentine ant infestation, contact a licensed pest professional.

### DID YOU KNOW? Argentine ants...

- give off a greasy or musty odor when crushed.
- are one of the few ant species where queens assist with foraging for food.
- were probably introduced to the U.S. from their native Brazil via coffee ships arriving to New Orleans in the late 1800s.
- deposit trails continuously, instead of just from nest to food source. This habit ensures they do not waste time visiting the same area for food.

For more information, visit [PESTWORLD.org](http://PESTWORLD.org)

