

# INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT!

## ARGENTINE ANT

(*Linepithema humile*)

### HAVE YOU SEEN THIS ANIMAL?

#### DESCRIPTION

- Small ants, with workers reaching 2-3 mm and queens being 4.5-5 mm.
- Red-brown to dark brown in colour.
- Can form thick lines of ants when foraging.
- Collect in large numbers at food sources.
- Have a smooth and shiny body that lacks hairs.
- Are not able to sting.



Photo credit: Sean McCann

**REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES**

Download the App!



[www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species](http://www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species)

#### PRIMARY THREAT:

*Argentine Ants could impact agricultural crops and gardens by increasing aphid populations and could out-compete native ant species for food and habitat.*

#### SPREAD

Argentine Ants form extremely large colonies that feed and reproduce as a group. Queens can produce up to 60 eggs each day allowing the colony to grow quickly. Colonies disperse by budding (individuals leave and form a new colony). It is a concern that Argentine ants could be moved around the province in products like plants, soil and wood.

Argentine Ants nest in a variety of locations including topsoil, under debris, or within manmade structures. They prefer moist areas and warm temperatures. These preferences suggest this species could establish in B.C.'s South Coast region, in urban environments that provide refuge during colder seasons.



Photo credit: Thmazing, Wikipedia Commons

For more information: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/invasive-species>



# ARGENTINE ANT (*Linepithema humile*)



Photo credit: Rob Higgins

## DISTRIBUTION & STATUS

As the name suggests, this species is native to Argentina, along with Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. Argentine Ants are present in Victoria, B.C. but have not been detected in other regions within Canada.

## LOOK-ALIKES:

There are three native Dolichoderinae ant species in B.C. that are difficult to tell apart from Argentine Ants, specifically the House ant (*Tapinoma sessile*). Argentine Ants in comparison to House ants are **lighter in colour**, and often **present in much greater numbers at food sources**.

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## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Learn to identify Argentine Ants.
- Check for stowaways on purchased goods especially plants, soil, compost, wood and other moist natural substrates.
- Raise awareness to avoid the spread of this species in B.C.

### For removal of Argentine Ants:

- Use insecticidal baits registered for use in Canada.
- Contact local pest control if issue becomes

## DID YOU KNOW?

Argentine Ants have been found to create colonies spreading 1,000 kilometers in length. That is roughly equal to travelling from Victoria to Calgary!



Photo credit: Eli Sarnat, Budwood.org

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