

INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT!

IMPRESSIVE FIRE ANT

(*Myrmica specioides*)

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS ANIMAL?

DESCRIPTION

Impressive Fire Ants...

- Appear very similar to European Fire Ants.
- Are small, approximately 4-5 mm.
- Appear reddish brown in colour.
- Have a constricted waist with two segments (most ants native to B.C. have a constricted waist and one segment).
- Can disperse by flight, and often gather in large flying swarms when mating.
- Can deliver a painful sting.



Photo credit: Eli Sarnat, Bugwood.org

REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES

Download the App!



www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species

PRIMARY THREAT:

Impressive Fire Ants could negatively impact humans and wildlife in B.C. due to their aggressive predation and nest protection behaviours.

SPREAD

Impressive Fire Ants are believed to have spread to North America in garden products such as soil, mulch and potted plants. They build nests in the ground or dead wood. Colonies consist of a few thousand individuals and arise in densities of around one colony per 10 m² where well established.

The habitat preferences of Impressive Fire Ant appear to vary across its native distribution. In Central Europe it tends to live in regions of higher temperatures, inhabiting open areas with little vegetation. In southern parts of its distribution, Impressive Fire Ants prefer cooler, shaded habitats. Human disturbed environments also appear to provide suitable habitat for Impressive Fire Ants. In the metro Vancouver area, they seem to prefer well drained soils.



Photo credit: Global News

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



IMPRESSIVE FIRE ANT (*Myrmica specioides*)

DISTRIBUTION & STATUS

Impressive Fire Ants are native to central and southern Europe, Turkey, Iran and Turkmenistan. Current known distribution in B.C. includes the YVR airport in Vancouver as well as locations throughout metro Vancouver and southern Vancouver Island.

REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES

Download the App!



www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species

LOOK-ALIKES:

It can be difficult to distinguish the Impressive Fire Ant from other ant species in B.C. It differs from many, but not all, native ant species in having **two body nodes between the thorax and the abdomen**. If uncertain:

Step 1: Collect a sample. Instructions on how to do this can be found [here](#).

Step 2: Send your samples to one of the following locations for identification. Please include your name and the date and location where the samples were collected.

Preferred location: Plant Health Laboratory, Ministry of Agriculture: download and complete the [necessary form](#).

Alternative Location 1: Dr. Rob Higgins, Department of Biological Sciences, Thompson Rivers University, 805 TRU Way, Kamloops, BC, V2C 0C8

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Check for any ants being carried in garden products (soil, mulch, plants etc.) and return product if found.
- Be wary of soil collected anywhere other than commercial bagged sources.
- Raise awareness in your community to avoid further establishment.
- Avoid/remove anything from area that traps heat and moisture.
- Removal:
 - Use insecticidal baits registered for use in Canada.
 - Contact local pest control if issue becomes unmanageable.



Photo credit: Global News

DID YOU KNOW?

The Impressive Fire Ant has only emerged as an invasive species in the Pacific Northwest in the past few years. It has not been recorded outside its native habitat anywhere else. In that short amount of time, however, it has become quite widespread.

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

