Green headed ants (*Rhytidoponera metallica*)

Summary

Green headed ants (*Rhytidoponera metallica*) are native ants. Sometimes considered pests due to their ability to deliver a painful sting and their nesting presence in lawned areas.

Where are they found?

These ants nest in the ground and are found outside in both urban and natural areas.

Damage

These ants do not damage or nest in buildings, but they may cause concern due to their painful sting. Nests in lawns may become an aesthetic concern.

Treatment

Insecticide sprays registered for ant control can be used to treat ants at the nest site. Granular baits containing hydramethylnon and an oil-based attractant can also offer control, although these are more expensive and may be best suited for larger areas. These products can be purchased from garden centres, hardware stores and agricultural chemical retailers.

Watch out!

Ants are often difficult to identify! There are a number of ants that have not established in Western Australia, but could significantly impact our outdoor lifestyle and WA’s agricultural industries and environment. See overleaf for reportable species!
Exotic ant threats to WA

Under the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007 (BAM Act) the introduction of these ants into WA is prohibited and any suspect sightings must be reported. Below are a few species we are particularly concerned about.

**Browsing ant** (*Lepisiota frauenfeldi*)

Native to southern Europe, they thrive in a Mediterranean climate and are ideally suited to Australian conditions. These aggressive ants form multi-queened super-colonies, quickly reaching very high populations and displacing native ant species and other invertebrates. They are also a significant horticultural and domestic pest. There have been a number of incursions in Australia, although all known infestations are under eradication.

**Red imported fire ants** (*Solenopsis invicta*)

One of the most serious ant pests in the world. These ants are aggressive, particularly near the nest and inflict a painful sting. They are present in south east Queensland and they could accidently be imported into Western Australia.

**Electric ants** (*Wasmannia auropunctata*)

One of the world’s worst invasive species, with a painful sting that will impact on outdoor lifestyle, the environment and agricultural industries. These ants are currently in northern Queensland and eradication efforts are underway.

**Yellow crazy ants** (*Anoplolepis gracilipes*)

Ability to spray formic acid which causes burning and irritates the skin and eyes of animals and humans. Found in the Pacific region and on Christmas Island, this ant has also spread extensively since arriving in Queensland.

**Carpenter ants** (*Camponotus spp.*)

Elsewhere in the world there are *Camponotus* species that are pests of timber and like termites, if left unchecked can cause extensive damage to structural timber and furniture.

**Reporting options**

Report unfamiliar, problematic or possible exotic pests via the options below:

- Pest and Disease Information Service (08) 9368 3080 or padis@dpird.wa.gov.au
- MyPestGuide™ Reporter App
- mypestguide.agric.wa.gov.au

For more information, see agric.wa.gov.au/ants

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