

Citronella Ant

Common Name: Large yellow ant

Common Family Name: Ants

Other Names: Citronella ant



Origin: Apparently native to North America, and common from the east coast states west to Washington and throughout the Midwest.

Biology: This is a single-node ant with workers as large as 5 mm. When crushed it has a lemony or “citronella-like” odor, giving it one of its names. Food is almost entirely sugary materials such as honeydew from plant feeding insects. Nests are in the soil, sometimes under logs or concrete slabs, and winged swarmers may enter the structure due to these nests below the slab.

Identification: The light yellow color and large size make these ants fairly distinct. There is a single node, the antennae have 12 segments with the first long segment shorter than the head, and the antennae gradually taper to an enlarged end. The top of the thorax has a distinct dip in it when viewed from the side. There is a small circle of hairs around the anal opening.

Characteristics Important in Control: This soil nesting ant is best controlled by locating the nest and treating directly into it. Baits are not normally accepted, as the workers tend to restrict their foraging to natural food sources. Elimination of objects on the soil that are not needed will reduce the nesting site opportunities for this ant.