

Fire Ants Invading North Carolina Described as Vicious and Destructive



FIRE ANT MOUNDS — Along with having many other bad characteristics, fire ants can outdo other ants in mound building. Some of their mounds are up to three feet in height. This picture was taken in the Lower South where fire ants have been a problem for many years.

Just what kind of critter is the imported fire ant?

This question might be in the minds of many people reading or hearing about the imported fire ant — subject of an intensive eradication campaign about to get underway in North Carolina.

C. H. Brannon, state entomologist of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, gives this thumbnail sketch of the imported fire ant.

The imported fire ant is a native of South America. It entered this country around 1918, but because it closely resembled native fire ants (in looks) it was not identified as a separate species until 1930.

Imported fire ants are small in size. Worker ants vary from one-eighth to one-fourth inch long, but they make up for their lack of size by their aggressiveness and numbers.

As fighters, they have few equals. They will bite and sting anything that goes near their mounds. On the attack they sink their jaws into the flesh, bring their abdomen forward and drive their stinger into the skin injecting a poison. The stings are painful and cause a festering sore susceptible to infection. The stings are dangerous to young children or persons allergic to the poison. One mound may contain 100,000 ants — all ready and willing to fight any intruder.

The ants' mound building habits are perhaps even more disconcerting than their stinging habits. Other ants build mounds but they are pikers compared to the imported fire ant. In heavily infested areas, 40 mounds per acre are common. These mounds vary in size up to about three feet in diameter and height, but most mounds measure about 18 inches. Since these mounds are crusty and hard, they pose a real problem during seeding, fertilizing and harvesting.

Although the ants will build mounds in almost any kind of terrain, they prefer land exposed to the sun. Therefore, some of the most valuable farming and pasture land is usually hardest hit. Whenever land is cultivated only intermittently, as in improved pastures, imported fire ants increase rapidly. This is especially important in improved pastures, imported fire ants increase rapidly. This is especially important in North Carolina where livestock production and dairying represent a vital part of the agricultural economy.

Another strong suit of imported

fire ants is their adaptability. They can live on a great variety of food including cabbage, corn, collards, eggplant, and potatoes, and they can tolerate a wide range of climatic conditions. For example, at the Gulfport, Miss., Imported Fire Ant Laboratory, the ants have been quick-frozen and kept at below zero temperature for two hours, thawed out and returned to below-zero temperatures for another two hours. After being thawed out again, the ants were as frisky as ever.

As practical evidence of their adaptability, it might be worth noting that the ants have already spread east-to-west from Morehead City, N. C., to San Antonio, Texas, a distance of about 1,250 air miles, and they've moved all the way south to Miami, Florida. The ability to spread quickly and widely is the reason State and Federal plant pest control officials are anxious to clear up the state's only large infestation in Carteret and Craven Counties. The eradication program in this area is scheduled to start this month.

Like most insects, imported fire ants are well organized. Divided into three forms: (1) winged, fertile females (queens); (2) winged, fertile males; and (3) worker ants (sterile females), each group carries out its own clearly defined duties. At mating time, usually in the spring, queens take to the air and mate with fertile males. The queen returns to earth, sheds her now worthless wings, digs a brood chamber and goes to work laying eggs. She also takes care of the first brood.

Worker ants take care of later broods, handle the fighting, and move the colony whenever necessary. The winged males die soon after fulfilling their one function—mating.

USDA Plant Pest Control scientists, who have been fighting these ants since 1957, are using the imported fire ants' penchant for organization against them. Only recently these scientists devised a new bait which has proved unusually effective. The bait is composed of ground corn cobs, soybean oil, and a small amount of slow acting insecticide. Because of its delayed action, foraging worker ants can carry the bait into the colony and feed the soybean oil to the queen and larvae before the insecticide starts taking effect. If it killed some of the ants quickly, the others would become suspicious

and leave the area before getting a fatal dose of the insecticide.

After the soybean oil (and insecticide) is removed from the corn cobs, the worker ants dutifully remove the grits from the mound and stack them in a neat pile. This enables pest control workers to see how well the ants are taking the bait.

And, as one final ironic note, plant pest control workers use the ants' good housekeeping practices to determine the effectiveness of the bait. As the ants die off, other ants remove the bodies and place them in an ant "bone-yard" outside the mound.

LEGAL NOTICES NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE NORTH CAROLINA JONES COUNTY

Under and by virtue of power of sale contained in that certain deed of trust executed on the 30th day of January, 1962 by Earlie William Hicks et ux, Willie Augustine Hicks, to Julius C. Smith, III, Trustee, and recorded in Book 139, Page 206, Jones County Registry, default having been made in the indebtedness thereby secured and said deed of trust being by the terms thereof subject to foreclosure, the undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction to the highest bidder for cash at the Courthouse door in Trenton, N. C., at 3:00 on the 19th day of May, 1964, the property conveyed in said deed of trust, the same lying and being in Jones County, N. C., and more particularly described as follows:

A certain lot or parcel of land in Belgrade Township, Jones County North Carolina, bounded on the north by Rubin Avenue, a dirt road leading westwardly from County Road No. 1437, bounded on the west and south by the Mattock's lands, and on the east by the lands of Viola Page; BEGINNING at an iron stake in the the southern edge of Rubin Avenue at the northwest corner of the Viola Page lands on said road; thence from this beginning in a southerly direction along the western line of the said Viola Page lands, 200 feet to another iron stake; thence in a westerly direction and parallel to said avenue, 75 feet to another iron stake; thence in a northerly direction and

SOUP AND SANDWICH FOR A QUICK SPRING LUNCH



Oh, how the whole family looks forward to the delightful days of April. Sunshine brings out the hats, balls, and gardening gloves... rain finds the family watching the first baseball games on television.

Whatever the activities, you'll want lunch to be a quick and easy affair but good and nourishing, too. Your best bet lies in all the wonderful vegetable soups available. The children love them... and they go so well with sandwiches.

Canned condensed vegetable bean soup is a good choice for spring. Hearty but not too robust, it's chock full of nutritious vegetables and tender, tasty beans. For extra color and flavor, add chopped cooked tomatoes. So good served with roast beef sandwiches on sesame seed rolls, crisp coleslaw, and fresh fruit.

Hearty Spring Soup

- 1 can (10% ounces) condensed vegetable bean soup
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup cooked tomatoes

In saucepan, combine all ingredients. Heat, stirring now and then. Makes 2 to 3 servings.

parallel to the first line hereof, 200 feet to the southern edge of said avenue; thence in an easterly direction along the southern edge of said avenue, 75 feet to the point of BEGINNING.

The highest bidder will be required to deposit in cash at the sale an amount equal to ten percent of the amount of his bid up to one thousand dollars plus five percent of the excess of his bid over one thousand dollars.

This sale will be made subject to all outstanding and unpaid taxes and assessments.

This the 7th day of April, 1964.
(s) MARTIN L. CROMARTIE
TRUSTEE

Martin L. Cromartie, Jr.
Attorney at Law
Tarboro, N. C.
Apr. 19, 26, May 2, 9

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The undersigned, having qualified as Executor of the Estate of Edwin E. McDaniel, deceased, late of Jones County, this is to notify all persons having claims against said Estate to present them to the undersigned before the 10th day of April, 1965, otherwise, this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate settlement.

This 10th day of April, 1964.
Wilmer F. McDaniel,
Executor of the Estate of
Edwin E. McDaniel
BROCK and HOOD
Attorneys at Law
Box 55
Trenton, N. C.
Apr. 13, 30 May 7, 14

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The undersigned, having qualified as Administratrix of the Estate of Nash Thomas, deceased, late of Jones County, this is to notify all persons having claims against said Estate to present them to the undersigned before the 8th day of February, 1965, otherwise, this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate settlement.

This 8th day of February, 1964.
Eva Thomas, Administratrix

of the Estate of
Nash Thomas
BROCK & HOOD
Attorneys at Law
Box 55
Trenton, N. C.
Apr. 9, 16, 23, 30

JOHNSTONIAN HELD

Robert S. Creech of Smithfield route 2 was jailed in Kinston Tuesday night in a drugged condition and charged with violation of state narcotics laws.

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