

## The Black Ant

In Britain, the black ant is commonly found in nests outdoors in soil, walls and under paving. The insect lives in large communities. Worker ants will forage widely in search of food to take back to the nest and occasionally enter houses in search of sweet foods. The workers will tend to follow well defined trails or paths to reach the food source.



**We can provide a pest control service to treat for ants. Details of our services are on the back of this page.** The remainder of this leaflet offers general information about ants, and explains what actions you can take yourself.

### Control Measures

#### a) Good housekeeping & maintenance

Ants are encouraged by sweet food products. The chances of them coming into our homes can be reduced by keeping kitchens clean and properly storing food.

- Cupboards, shelves and work surfaces that may have sweet substances on them should be thoroughly cleaned with hot soapy water to remove any traces
- Food containers such as jam jars, treacle tins, molasses, etc. should be tightly closed after use and the jar and lid thoroughly cleaned.

#### b) Treating the nest

In most cases, the nest will be outside the property. Occasionally it may be within the cavity wall of the houses, or below floorboards. Dealing with the nest is the best way to prevent the ants from entering the property. Although the actual location of the nest can be difficult to find, the general area can be located by following the trail of worker ants to the outside and 'doing a little detective work'.

The nest should be treated with a suitable insecticide, which is approved for use against ants. There are a number of products on the market, which are available from DIY stores, garden centres, chemists, etc. Such products will contain the same active ingredients as the insecticides used by Council and other professional pest controllers, although they may not be quite as strong. It is important that you follow manufacturer's instructions carefully if using such products.

#### c) Treating access points

The place or places where the ants are gaining access should be established and a suitable insecticide should be used around that area. It is likely that ants will be gaining access from around skirting boards, cracks in the floor/wall or around windows. The insecticide should be placed in such a way that any ants entering the room are forced to come into contact with it.

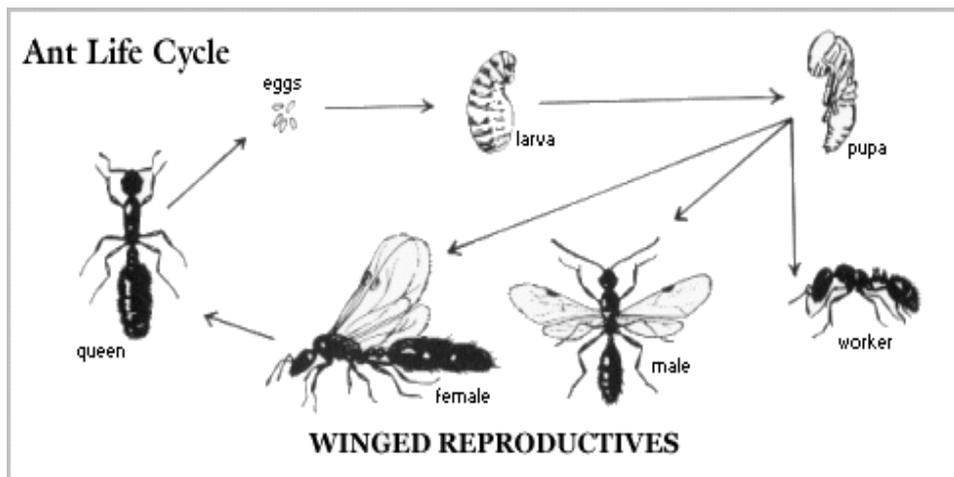
Once again, only insecticides that are approved for use against ants should be used and the manufacturers instructions and safety precautions must be followed carefully when using such products.

You must be patient when using insecticides against ants as these are often not the "knock down" type which have an immediate effect (e.g. fly sprays). The poison acts by the ants taking it back on their bodies to the nest. For this reason, you will continue to see ants for some days but their numbers should decrease.

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## Flying Ants

Flying ants are not a separate type of ant. They are merely winged black ants, which emerge from the nest in large numbers over a short time period. This usually occurs in the late summer and will often occur from many nests in an area at the same time. The winged ants fly away. The males then die within a few days. The mated females go on to create new colonies.



The emergence of flying ants from a nest is not something which can be prevented by any professional pest controller, nor can they usually attend quickly enough to treat such "swarming" once it has happened, since it is often over in a few hours. The only control that is instant enough to have any effect, is the use of a knock-down aerosol insecticide, i.e. fly-spray, and physical controls such as keeping doors and windows closed.

### General Precaution you should take

- Always read and follow manufacturer's instructions on use.
- Do not use insecticide near foodstuffs.
- Take care around fires and electrical appliances (many sprays are flammable)
- Ensure you are using the right type of insecticide for the pest and the type circumstances which you have.
- Inform other members of the household where insecticide has been used, and keep pests and children away from treated areas.
- Use appropriate protective clothing where the product information advises.

### Services from Us.

We will not treat ant colonies unless the ants are getting into a property, and the householder requesting our service agrees to pay our charges.

We do not treat nests in grass verges, or pavements.

- To request our help please call 01782 742590 during office hours.
- Our current charges are detailed on our website at [www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk](http://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk), or available by calling our Customer Services Team on 01782 742590
- Some landlords may pay this charge on your behalf if you live in rented accommodation.
- Our waiting times are typically 3-5 working days.

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Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council  
Castle House  
Barracks Road  
Newcastle-under-Lyme  
ST5 1BL

Telephone  
01782 742590

Email [customerservices@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk)