

# PestGazette



## How Does Your Garden Grow? Consider this Before Digging in Your Flower Beds ...

**H**ave you ever stopped to consider that what you do in your plant beds, especially up close to your home's foundation, may impact the termite activity in and around your home?

As you dig and plant (or even have construction done) near the foundation of your home, you may be disrupting a termite-treated zone or barrier that you have paid for to prevent a termite infestation. Always keep this in mind *before* you dig!

Many homeowners love to mulch their yards. And there are a variety of mulch brands out there including pine straws and wood/bark mulch. Mulch is meant to insulate and keep plants warm in the winter, and then provide moisture retention and

protection in the dryer months of the year. Research evidence supports the fact that termites are attracted to both increased thermal and moisture gradients. In lay terms, this means that termites will follow and cue in on increased warmth and water areas near a home. If you are going to use mulch in your garden near your home, rake it away from the home's foundation and the treated zone; you may also want to consider using hardwood over softwood mulch, as softwoods have been shown to be more attractive to termites. Hardwood mulch is harder to find, but may be worth the effort in the long run.

*If for any reason you should suspect termite activity, don't forget to give us a call!*

## Termite Swarms

**O**ne of the most visible signs of a termite infestation is the presence of flying termites, sometimes called swarmers. These dark – bodied, winged termites emerge in large numbers in the spring, in search of mates to begin a new colony. Most termites in a colony are worker termites. Workers are soft bodied, creamy-white in color and spend nearly all of their time inside the soil, enclosed inside mud shelter tubes, or feeding inside wood. Worker termites easily dry out when exposed to sunlight and the drying effects of air. Swarmers, on the other hand are designed to leave the soil and strike out in search of mates in the hope of starting a new colony.

Swarmer termites are dark in color with four wings of equal size and shape. This is one of the ways that flying termites can be distinguished from flying ants. Ants have four wings too, but the front wing of an ant is larger the rear wing. In addition to wing size and shape, ants have a constricted, or narrow "waist" separating the thorax

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**Did you know ... that more than 600,000 U.S. homes suffer from termite damage totaling more than \$5 billion annually?**

More than 2 million homes require termite treatment each year. Homeowners insurance can help recover losses from fires, floods and earthquakes, but it is almost impossible to get insurance against termites.

Termites are found in almost every state as well as Mexico and parts of Canada. They eat wood and may also destroy paper products, cardboard boxes, furniture, and various other items. Even buildings with steel framing and masonry walls are targets because of the wooden doors, window frames, support beams, cabinets and shelving.

Finding out your home has termites can be scary. You typically can't see them, you can't hear them and frequently only a trained inspector can find signs of an infestation. Do-it-yourself treatments for the control of termites are virtually impossible. Specialized equipment is used and only experts have the necessary knowledge for effective control. A trained termite control specialist can provide protection from termite infestation.

To learn more about how we can develop a termite management plan best suited to your situation, call us, your trained pest professionals, today.



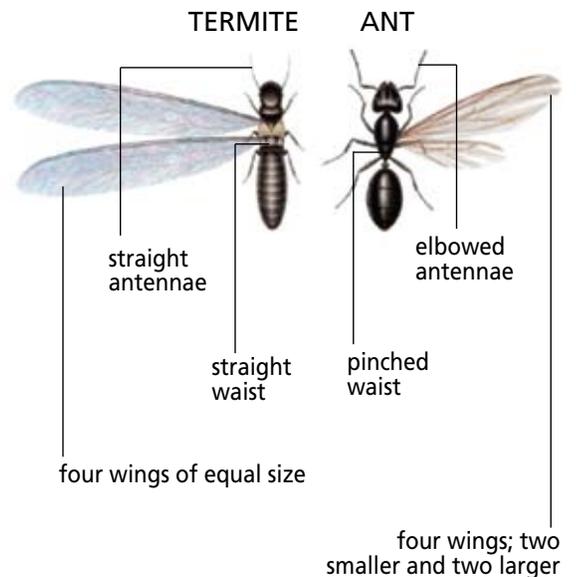
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(where the legs are attached) from the abdomen. Alternatively, termites have a broad "waist." One final way to distinguish a termite swarmer from a flying ant are the antennae. Ants have "elbowed" or bent antennae, but termites have straight antennae.

When termite colonies swarm, hundreds or thousands of winged termites are released. When this occurs indoors, the insects are often attracted to light sources, so homeowners may find piles of swarmers on windowsills or around other light sources. Soon after emergence, termite swarmers will break off their wings, so it isn't uncommon to see piles of wings on windowsills or countertops.

Even though nearly all termite swarmers will perish if they emerge inside a structure, it's important to contact your pest professional immediately. Termites swarming inside indicate an underlying termite infestation that may not be visible. A trained inspector can provide insight into the hidden infestation and provide a plan for eliminating termites from your home. ■



# Entomophagy: If You Can't Beat 'em, Eat 'em

Entomophagy is the practice of eating insects. People around the globe have been eating insects for thousands of years. In Western society, it's rare to find insects at the dinner table, but in many other parts of the world, insects are a common part of people's diets. Many people from Central and South America, Asia, and Africa incorporate insects into their everyday diets.

More than 1,400 different species of insects are known to be edible. These include insects such as crickets, grasshoppers, ants, silkworms and even some spiders and scorpions. It turns out that eating insects has some nutritional benefits too. In general, insects are low in carbohydrates, high in protein, calcium and iron. (See table below.)

If eating insects seems strange to you, consider this. Insects are arthropods, grouped together with other animals with external skeletons (shells) and jointed appendages. Examples of other arthropods include crustaceans like lobsters and crabs. Many crustaceans are widely considered delicacies in western society, so why not try some Cricket Pad Thai? It might just be the next big thing! ■

## Nutritional Values of Selected Insects Compared to Beef

Insect	protein (g)	fat (g)	carb (g)	calcium (mg)	iron (mg)
Giant water beetle	19.8	8.3	2.1	43.5	13.6
Red Ant	13.9	8.3	2.9	47.8	5.7
Silkworm Pupae	9.6	3.5	2.3	41.7	1.8
Dung Beetle	17.2	5.6	0.2	30.9	7.7
Cricket	12.9	4.3	5.1	75.8	9.5
Grasshopper	20.3	5.5	3.9	35.2	5.0
June Beetle	13.4	3.3	2.9	22.6	6.0
Termite	20.4	N/A	N/A	21	35.5
Beef (lean ground)	27.4	5.5	N/A	N/A	3.5

Source: <http://www.ent.iastate.edu/misc/insectnutrition.html>



## Recipe: Cricket Pad Thai (Serves 6 – 8)

### Ingredients:

- 8-10 oz dried rice stick noodles
- 6 tablespoons fish sauce
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 6 tablespoons lime juice
- 4 tsp. sugar
- 4 tablespoons peanut oil
- 1 cup crickets (prepared properly)
- 3-4 cloves garlic
- 3 eggs – lightly beaten
- ½ cup scallions, finely chopped
- 2 cups bean sprouts
- ¼ cup crushed peanuts
- ½ cup fresh cilantro
- 1 lime (cut into wedges, one wedge per serving)

### Directions:

- Combine the fish sauce, soy sauce, lime juice and organic sugar in a bowl and blend well.
- Pour oil into a wok or skillet, and cook the crickets over medium-high heat.
- Push crickets to one side and scramble the eggs on the other side of the wok or skillet. Remove crickets and eggs and set aside in bowl or on plate.
- Add garlic and scallions and fry until soft.
- Add sauce mixture, crickets and eggs back into the wok or skillet, and warm thoroughly.
- Cook rice noodles for about 10 minutes in boiling water.
- Remove and drain noodles, and add to wok or skillet.
- Add in bean sprouts and toss thoroughly, being careful not to break the noodles. Top with peanuts, cilantro, and garnish with a lime wedge.
- This dish goes great with Vietnamese spring rolls.

Source: <http://www.insectsarefood.com/recipes.php>



Be sure to tell your pest management professional about any wasps you see indoors. They can do a careful inspection around the property to identify nest building activity and stop it in its tracks. Once paper wasps begin building their nests, they can be aggressive when disturbed and they can inflict a painful sting.

## Overwintering Wasp Queens

If you happen to see one or two lone wasps inside the house this spring, don't be alarmed, it's probably just an overwintering queen that has become trapped indoors. Cold temperatures kill paper wasp colonies each winter, but before they are eliminated, the colonies produce male wasps to mate with a few lucky females who will be next summer's queens. These mated females overwinter in sheltered places like under logs or behind loose tree bark to survive the dipping temperatures. Often these overwintering future-queens will climb behind siding or through attic vents to seek shelter.

As temperatures warm in the spring, most of these wasps "wake up" from their winter slumber and fly outside where they will begin the work of building a new nest, laying eggs and hunting for food to feed developing larvae.

But instead of flying out, some overwintering wasps find their way into the living spaces of homes. You might see some of these wasps flying around windows attempting to exit. Often they seem sluggish or clumsy; this is because they are just waking up from their "Long winter nap." In most cases, overwintering queen wasps are docile, although they are capable of stinging, they generally are more interested in getting outside than bothering humans.

Opening a window or door will usually be enough to encourage the wasps to fly outside, where they belong. It's a good idea to let your pest management professional know about these sightings on their next visit so that a careful inspection can be made around the property to identify nest building activity and stop it in its tracks. Once paper wasps begin building their nests, they can be aggressive when disturbed and they can inflict a painful sting. ■

