Are These Termites, Or Are They Ants?

A lot of Orange County homeowners have been seeing swarms of winged-insects around their homes this summer. Our area has more than its fair share of termite problems, so it is easy to understand why so many people would automatically assume they are seeing swarming termites. However, not all swarming insects are termites – they could just be flying ants.

How can you tell the difference between termites and flying ants?

It is easy to confuse termites with flying ants. To tell the difference, you’re going to have to take a closer look.

If you’re looking at a termite, you’ll see it has a head with a cigar-shaped body attached (straight waist). A termite has two pairs of equal-length wings that are almost twice as long as its body. Also, the termite has straight antennae.

The easiest way to determine if what you’re looking at is an ant is to look at the insect’s waist. If it has a pinched waist, you know it is an ant. Take a look at the photo in this article and you’ll see that the ant’s waist is very small. It is almost like the ant’s tail section is held on by a thread! Ants have two pairs of unequal-length wings – the front pair are much larger than the rear pair. Lastly, the ant’s antennae are elbowed.

Termites and ants swarm during different times of the year. Subterranean termites usually swarm in the early spring, and drywood termites will generally swarm in the fall. Ants usually swarm in the late spring and summer.

Termites and ants that have wings are the young kings and queens of their colonies. They use their wings to fly out of their nests in search of a mate. Once they find a
new partner, their wings are shed and the mating process begins. This is how new colonies of termites and ants are formed.

**Will flying ants damage the wood in my home?**

The most common ants that we deal with in Orange County are Argentine ants (*Iridomyrmex humilis*), and they are no threat to the wood in our homes.

In very rare cases, you may encounter carpenter ants (*Camponotus spp.*). This species of ant is one of the largest ants you’ll find – they are about a ½ inch long. Carpenter ants can do a lot of damage to a home and can be very difficult to eradicate. These pests are a big problem in the Pacific Northwest, and in areas of old forests.

**How do I get rid of flying ants?**

If you see a lot of these flying ants in your home, the first step would be to vacuum them up. Live flying ants that are difficult to reach can be taken care of by spraying them with a household cleaner, such as Windex or 409 Spray. Once you are finished vacuuming, take the vacuum outside and empty it into a sealed trash container.

The next step is to locate the ant nest and eliminate it. This is very important because even though you may have just vacuumed up one hundred flying ants, there could still be 50,000 to 100,000 more ants left in the nest.

Finding the nest is not always easy to do and may take some time. If possible, try and find the point from which they are entering your home. It may take a while, but if you’ll follow the ants while they are moving about, they will often lead you to their entry point.

Once you find the entry point, go outside of your home and inspect the exterior wall in that area. Quite often, you’ll find a trail of ants in that area. From there, follow the trail of ants and they will lead you to their nest.

While doing your inspection, pay special attention to any plants or trees that are touching the house as this is also a common way for ants to get into your home. Follow the ants, as they climb up and down the plants or trees, and you may find a nest in the ground below.

When you find the nest, you can treat it by simply injecting a residual insecticide directly into the nest. If you prefer to use an ant bait, apply it near the hole of the nest. Ant baits can be very effective but it may take a long time before the ants are gone. Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions carefully when using any insecticide products.

By following these steps, you can solve a lot of ant problems yourself. If you have a problem that is getting out of hand and you need help, please call us at (949) 631-7348 and we’ll be happy to assist.
category by the Costa Mesa Award Program.

Each year, the Costa Mesa Award Program identifies companies that we believe have achieved exceptional marketing success in their local community and business category. These are local companies that enhance the positive image of small business through service to their customers and our community. These exceptional companies help make Costa Mesa area a great place to live, work and play.

Various sources of information were gathered, both internally by the Costa Mesa Award Program and data provided by third parties.”

Typhus Cases Are On The Rise In Long Beach

The city of Long Beach is seeing a significant increase in the number of typhus cases. In the first six months of 2021, the number of cases has more than doubled when compared to the same time period during previous years.

So far, 10 cases have been reported this year. While still a low number, the city generally averages only 4 cases by the mid-point of a year.

Flea-borne typhus is caused by the bacteria (Rickettsia typhi), and is transmitted by infected fleas. Infected fleas can be carried by rats, cats, dogs, raccoons, and opossums.

Symptoms begin within two weeks after contact with an infected flea. Some of the signs are high fever, headache, chills, nausea, vomiting, muscle pain, and rash. Antibiotics are typically used for treating typhus.

To help prevent typhus, health department officials are asking for you to make sure your cats and dogs are kept free of fleas.

Additional steps would include:

- Don’t leave pet food outdoors.
- Avoid clutter and overgrown vegetation that may harbor wild animals.
- Don’t feed wild animals.
- Store trash in cans with secure lids.
- Apply an EPA-registered insect repellent for use against fleas when you are outdoors.

President’s Economic Stimulus

Anyone who puts gasoline in their car can see that prices are going up. Our president feels your pain and wants to help you by giving you a FREE tank of gas.

Here are just a few more of your fellow citizens who have benefited from President Termite Terry’s Economic Stimulus Plan:

- Nick Shaffer of Huntington Beach referred us to David Lee of Huntington Beach.
- Jason Shelton of Rancho Santa Margarita recommended us to Nhat Nguyen of Aliso Viejo.
- David Salamin of Costa Mesa referred us to Lan Tran of Ladera Ranch.
- Sandi Wilson of Huntington Beach referred us to Vicki Nierlich of Huntington Beach.

The President’s plan is easy and with your help, we can double the number of people who get FREE GAS each month. All you have to do is simply refer us to someone who needs a termite treatment, wood repairs, or a monthly pest control service. And, if they hire us, we’ll send you a $50.00 Gas Card. That is real economic stimulation you can bank on!

National Peach Month

In 1982, President Reagan declared August as National Peach Month. Let’s take a look at some fun facts about this delicious fruit:

- There are over 2,000 varieties of peaches in the world.
- Peaches originated in China. Recent data shows that domestic peaches occurred as early as 6000 BC, in the province of Zhejiang.
- Peaches can be broken down into two groups: clingstone and freestone. Clingstone peaches have their pits tightly attached to the flesh, and are mostly used for canning. The freestone peaches have pits that can be easily removed from the flesh, and they are primarily sold as fresh fruit.
- Peaches with white flesh are typically sweet with little acidity. Yellow fleshed peaches typically have an acid tang, coupled with sweetness.
- August 24th is National Peach Pie Day.
- California produces about 50% of the peaches in the U.S. South Carolina is the second largest producer, and Georgia is the third.
- A large peach has fewer than 70 calories and contains 3 grams of fiber.
- Most peach trees live about 15 years. It takes two years for a tree to start producing fruit, and the tree will be in it’s prime by year 4. A good tree will produce about 66 pounds per year.
- Every year, at Georgia’s Peach Festival, they make the world’s largest peach cobbler. It measures 11 by 5 feet, and is about 8 inches deep. It contains 90 pounds of butter, 150 pounds of sugar, 150 pounds of flour, 32 gallons of milk, and 75 gallons of peaches!

You know, that peach cobbler sounds pretty good. I think I’ll ask them for a couple of plates of that!
A mob of angry killer bees went on attack in a restaurant parking lot, leaving three people hospitalized.

John, along with his best friend and girlfriend, decided to have dinner at a restaurant in Fountain Valley. After he parked and got out of his car, he noticed a couple of bees. As he swatted them away, more bees started coming after him. The bees also started attacking his girlfriend and best friend. In complete panic, all three of them took off running in different directions.

When they met up a few minutes later, John’s best friend was crying like a baby and asking for help. He had been injured during the attack. John then managed to find his girlfriend. He had to remove bees from her hair, and pull bee stingers from her neck. Both his girlfriend and best friend had to be hospitalized.

When the first responders arrived on the scene, they were unable to reach John and his friends because the bees had spread throughout the parking lot. The situation was so bad that they had to call for five ambulances, and five more teams of firefighters.

Fire-fighting foam was sprayed over the area to remediate the bees. It took them about four hours before the area could be considered safe for reentry. A total of three people had to be hospitalized. Three firefighters and a police officer were stung, but no treatment was needed.

Ladies and gentlemen, most honeybees are docile and they won’t attack you unless you disturb them. However, killer bees can be extremely aggressive and if given the opportunity, they will take you down. If you ever do encounter these killer bees, don’t start swatting at them. Instead, carefully and quickly get out of the area without alarming them. Once you’re in a safe location, then it is time to call in a professional for help. This is definitely one pest that you don’t want to deal with unless you really know what you’re doing!