

FIRE ANTS

Biology

Fire ants are social insects consisting of a queen, workers, eggs and larvae. The queen lives in a protected nest which may be several feet deep. There may be several satellite nests near the main nest and some nests may have more than one queen. Fire ants usually have two flying swarms each year. After mating the fertilized queen begins a new colony.

Tactics for Control

Baits - Baits work best when used in the spring and early summer. When the weather gets hot and dry, baits in general are ineffective for fire ant control. Baits work slowly; ant activity will gradually decrease over a period of 30 days. The best bait on the market is Maxforce Fire Ant Granular Bait.

Contact Insecticides - This is definitely the quickest and most complete route to make your yard fire ant free. Mix up a solution of Cypermethrin in a bucket, open the fire ant mound with a stick and pour between 1/2 and 2 gallons of solution into the mound, depending on the size of the fire ant colony. This flooding of the colony will not give the fire ant queen a chance to escape. Spray the areas around the mound to kill all the satellite colonies.

Retreatment - Because fire ants are continually recolonizing, retreatments should be made on the emerging mounds throughout the year.