

Pest Profile



Photo credit: By Jim Kalisch, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Common Name: Acrobat Ant

Scientific Name: *Crematogaster spp.*

Order and Family: Hymenoptera: Formicidae

Size and Appearance: Worker ants are monomorphic (similar size) and roughly 2.5-4 mm in length. The ants are light brown to black in color, have 11-segmented antennae with a 3-segmented club, as well as 1 dorsal spine on the thorax. They are often distinguished by having a “heart-shaped” gaster, or the first portion of the abdomen, which is visible when in dorsal view. When disturbed, the ants will produce a repulsive scent.

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	< 0.05 mm in length	White, round, eggs are laid by queen, sometimes having multiple queens. Colonies vary in size and have been known to nest at higher altitudes.
Larva/Nymph	0.2-5 mm in length depending on instar	Small, white, cylindrical body.
Adult	2.5-4 mm long depending on caste	Similar sized workers with brown/black body color, 11-segmented antennae with 3-segmented club, and 1 spine present on thorax. Heart-shaped gaster.
Pupa (if applicable)	1.5-5 mm long	Pupal cased formed from the last larval skin and is dark brown. Size depends on caste.

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Chewing

Host /s: *Cremastogaster* feed mostly on high sugar-based foods such as honeydew. As a result, they are usually found tending species that produce honeydew such as aphids and mealybugs. They have been known to feed on live and dead insects when given the option.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): This species is mostly a nuisance pest and will enter homes in hot weather. They nest in insulation, soft wood, and Styrofoam. They will enlarge holes already present in wood, causing piles of debris and weaken structures. Also known to chew on electrical wiring.

References:

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