

## Pest Profile



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

**Common Name:** Fire Ant

**Scientific Name:** *Solenopsis spp.*

**Order and Family:** Hymenoptera: Formicidae

**Size and Appearance:** Worker ants are polymorphic (different sizes) and roughly 1.6-6 mm in length, reddish brown in color with darker abdomen. Antenna is 10-segmented with a 2-segmented club and they have no spines present on their thorax. A large stinger is also visible on worker ants.

	<b>Length (mm)</b>	<b>Appearance</b>
<b>Egg</b>	<b>&lt; 0.05 mm in length</b>	<b>White, round, eggs are laid by queen in numbers equalling body weight in large mounds.</b>
<b>Larva/Nymph</b>	<b>0.2-6 mm in length depending on instar</b>	<b>Small, white, cylindrical body.</b>
<b>Adult</b>	<b>1.6-6 mm long depending on caste</b>	<b>Varying size in workers, no spines present on thorax, large stinger, 10-segmented antennae and 2 clubbed antennae.</b>
<b>Pupa (if applicable)</b>	<b>2.0-6.0 mm long</b>	<b>Pupal cased formed from the last larval skin and is yellowish-brown in color.</b>

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

**Host /s:** *Solenopsis spp.* Show a preference for high protein food sources such as other insects and plant material. However, they will feed on most anything if hungry enough including clothing, insulation, tree bark, oily meats, and sweets.

**Description of Damage (larvae and adults):** Mostly considered a nuisance pest, they elicit a very painful sting and the mounds they build are difficult to remove. They can cause damage to buildings if feeding habits have them gnawing on insulation and electrical wires.

**References:**

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