



About Termites

Do you know the DANGEROUS difference? If you see winged, ant-like insects flying around your property, you need to know whether they are ants or subterranean termites. Your house could be in danger!

Carefully compare the insects flying around your house to the illustrations below. If you're uncertain, call us for positive identification. If the insects are termites, **CALL US IMMEDIATELY**.

Winged Ant

Elbowed antennae

Narrow waist

Front wings longer than back wings

Actual size 1/2 inch



Winged Termite

Straight antennae

Thick waist

Both pairs of wings are the same size

Actual size 1/2 inch

The Eastern Subterranean termite is the most common termite in North America; throughout eastern U.S. and as far west as Montana. A single structure can often contain multiple colonies. Telltale signs include dirt-colored mud tubes and translucent wings shed by kings and queens.

An average colony can consume 5 grams of wood per day and can enter buildings through cracks less than 1/16" wide. Secondary colonies can exist above ground.

Termites feed on cellulose materials including wood, paper, and cotton; occasionally even roots of shrubs and trees.

King and Queen



At least one king and queen are at the center of every colony. The queen's sole purpose is to reproduce. Some live for as long as 30 years.

The queen will add 5,000 to 10,000 eggs annually.

Eggs

Queens can lay thousands of eggs every year. Eggs hatch into nymphs.



Nymphs

While in the nymph state, termites diverge into different castes: workers, soldiers, reproductives, and supplementary reproductives.



Workers

Workers are blind, wingless termites that maintain the colony, build and repair the nest and tubes, forage for food, and care for the other termites. They are the most numerous caste and the most likely to be found in infested wood. A mature colony can contain from 20,000 to 5 million workers, averaging 300,000.



Soldiers

Soldiers are sterile, wingless, and blind. Their sole function is to defend the colony.



Winged Reproductives

These termites will eventually leave the colony as adult Swarmers. After swarming, they shed their wings and pair up. Each male-female pair attempts to start a new colony.



Supplementary Reproductives

These termites help increase the population of established colonies and can serve as replacements for the king or queen if they should die.

- An average Eastern Sub termite colony can consume 5 grams of wood per day, the equivalent of 2-1/3 linear feet of a 2' x 4' pine board annually.
- Colony growth is slow, and it may take years before swarmers are produced.
- Eastern Sub termites can enter buildings through cracks less than 1/16" wide
- The termite colony is made up of different types (castes) of termites — each with separate work responsibilities.
- Although Eastern Sub termite colonies are largely located in the ground below the frost line, secondary colonies can exist above ground, and examples of true above-ground colonies existing without any ground contact have been seen. However, such above-ground colonies have access to moisture and often the source is a roof or plumbing leak.
- Eastern Sub termites will often build mud tubes for travel between their colonies and their food sources.
- The king and queen in a colony can live for 10 to 30 years, while workers live for about two years.