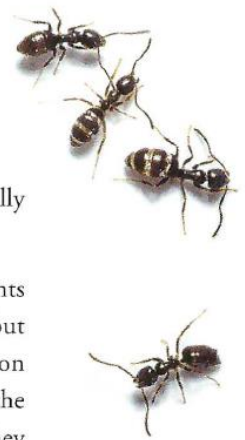




# Sugar Ants and Odorous House Ants are the Same Pesky Pest

By Lavonne Dideon, Owner of Aspire Pest Solutions



Expert Contributor

The Pacific NW once had few insects; however, new species have hitched rides on imported landscape material, lumber, and other items from warmer climates like Florida and Arizona.

Most people call them “sugar ants.” However, they are known in the pest industry as “Odorous House Ants”. Years ago, they were discovered in the Tacoma area and they quickly spread to the greater Seattle region. They get their name from the strange odor they emit when crushed. The worker ants are often found in wall voids, while the queens and colony are often outside near moisture and stumps or trees.

They are basically harmless but their army of thousands can be very annoying in your home, and they can get into food. Occasionally they will bite you in the garden and it will leave an itchy red welt.

## FACTS

**30+ Queens in a Colony:** Most ant species in this region have one queen. If the queen is killed, then the whole colony will die. Not so for the Odorous House Ant. With so many queens it is easier for the colony to survive treatments and quickly rebuild their colonies.

**They Live in Your Walls:** They prefer kitchen and bathroom walls due to moisture around the water lines. They also like the moisture in your house plants.

**Avoid Spraying:** Almost all over-the-counter ant sprays have repellants in them; and while the sprays may kill some of them, they can cause the ant colonies to split into new colonies. A unique aspect of these ants is illustrated when they are stressed; half of the queens will move and the colony splits in two. Within months, you could easily have numerous colonies. Even natural products (like vinegar, or peppermint oil) will cause the colonies panic and they will split. Windex is a great option for the homeowner for quick relief. It will kill worker ants on contact but doesn't kill the colony

or queens. Over time, ants will eventually avoid over-the-counter baits

**Armies of Ants:** Odorous House Ants don't damage the wood in your home, but they will hunker down in the insulation of your wall voids and reproduce by the thousands. During the summer months they will mostly feed outside. You won't see their numbers building until they are driven back into the house because of the colder weather.

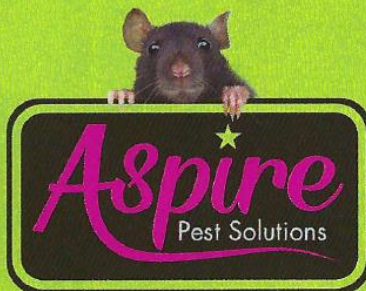
**Your Neighbors Have Them Too:** Once these ants move into a neighborhood, they easily take over the entire area. These ants will probably never go away completely but there are ways to protect your home and avoid the annoyance of these invasive pests. These ants can build up colonies that reach tens of thousands and then when their numbers get too big, they just split into a second or third colony.

**Watch Vegetation Around Your Home:** Because they love vegetation, try to keep vegetation and wood piles 18” from the exterior of your home. It is critical to managing and reducing the Odorous House Ant populations and other pests as well. This also helps with the effectiveness of pest treatment programs.

**Long Term Programs Do Work:** Aspire Pest Solutions will utilize a mix of products when we treat for Odorous House Ants. We design our programs to get the ants under control and then reduce the chances of them moving back into the home. Our Monthly treatment program allows for a more targeted approach where we protect your home and yard from these annoying difficult ants.their mouths open just eating. With a steady amount of food, they can grow to be 8 inches in length. Because of their size they can be a bit more difficult to remove from your yard.

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