

Drywood Termites

Drywood termites attack dry, undecayed wood, including structural timber, dead limbs of native trees, and shade and orchard trees, utility poles, posts, furniture and lumber in storage. Usually small colonies of a few hundred individuals infest a small, localised area of timber typically below floor level. Drywood termites are economically important only in restricted coastal, tropical, sub-tropical and adjacent tableland areas of Australia.

Unlike subterranean termites, drywood termites have a low moisture requirement and can tolerate dry conditions for prolonged periods. They remain entirely above ground and do not connect their nests to the soil. Piles of their faecal pellets, which are distinctive in appearance, may be a clue to their presence. These pellets are elongate with six concave surfaces.

Drywood termites are mostly confined to the coastal regions where the moisture content of dry timber is enough to sustain their requirements (around 12%). Winged reproductives seasonally migrate to nearby buildings and other structures where they may enter a small hole in the wood and start a new colony.

Structural damage is rare from drywood termites, and they are generally considered of low economic significance. However the extremely destructive West Indian drywood termite is the exception. Occurrences of these pests are rare, but when located they must by law, be reported and treated. Ask your local TermAForce technician for more information on how to control these pests.



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Faecal pellets are a clue to drywood termite presence