ANTS A NUISANCE? HERE ARE REMEDIES

The tiny active insects known as ants are especially numerous in the summertime, and are frequently unwelcome intruders in homes and gardens. There are many species of them, all are social in their habits, and live together in colonies. The majority of the ants in a colony and the ones most commonly seen are wingless undeveloped female workers, which are incapable of reproducing their kind.

A common and troublesome household species is the tiny reddish-yellow Pharaoh's ant, which originated in the tropics but is now widespread in Canada. The common large black carpenter ant is normally an outdoor species nesting principally in decaying wood, but frequently occurs in dwellings, particularly frame houses and summer cottages, and may cause damage to woodwork. A third common species is the small yellowish-brown lawn ant, which nests in lawns and gardens and often enters houses in search of food.

Destructive Powder

According to the Division of Entomology, Science Service, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, the most satisfactory material for destroying ants is sodium fluoride, sold by druggists in the form of a fine white powder. This powder should be scattered or blown with an insecticide puffer or dust-gun in places where the ants occur, and should not be removed until the insects have disappeared. Sodium fluoride is a poison and should not be exposed in places where children or pets may have access to it. Another method, recommended as particularly effective against Pharaoh's ants, consists of using a poisoned-bait trap. This is made by punching several holes in the sides of a small tin can with a tight lid, and placing in it a small piece of sponge and a small quantity of syrup prepared by mixing 4 ounces of sugar and ¼ ounce of honey in one-half pint of hot water, and adding ½ gram of sodium arsenite. The worker ants are greatly attracted to the bait and take it to their nests to feed the larvae and queen. The number of tins to use depends on the size of the premises and the extent of the infestation. In preparing and using this bait it should be borne in mind that sodium arsenite is very poisonous to humans.

Ants may be discouraged from entering houses by keeping shelves, tables, and floors as free as possible from food fragments, and by storing foodstuffs in ant-proof containers. In addition, openings in floors and walls through which ants may enter should be carefully plugged. When it is possible to find the nests in the ground outside, the ant colonies may be destroyed by puncturing holes in the surface and pouring in a small quantity of carbon bisulphide. Heavy gas is given off by this liquid and its effect may be increased by covering the nest with an old coat or sacking. Care should be taken not to expose carbon bisulphide near fire as it is very in-
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