

Yellow crazy ant (364)

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. Common in Pacific island countries. Favours disturbed agriculture, forest areas, houses. Characteristic long antennae and quick jerky movements. Does not sting; sprays formic acid. Among world's 100 worst invasive species.
- Nests on ground or in trees; forms super-colonies (10-150ha), up to 20 million workers/ha. A scavenger. Eats seeds, other insects, molluscs, smaller vertebrates, and honeydew. Forages day and night.
- Direct damage: vegetable seeds; loss of biodiversity; indirectly by defending aphids, mealybugs, scales and whiteflies from natural enemies.
- Tramp ant. Spread by 'budding' - queens and workers leave the colony; spread via international trade.
- Biosecurity: requires risk assessments, regulations preventing introduction, protocols in case of breaches, and ability to make rapid response. Pacific Ant Prevention Plan available (IUCN/SSC Invasive Specialist Group).
- Cultural control: hot water at 47°C kills ants; over 49°C kills plants.
- Chemical control: use (i) stomach poisons (fipronil, Amdro[®], borax), (ii) growth regulators (methoprene, pyriproxyfen), (iii) nerve poisons (bifenthrin, fipronil, imidacloprid). See (<http://piat.org.nz/getting-rid-of-ants>).

Common Name

Yellow crazy ant, long-legged ant

Scientific Name

Anoplolepis gracilipes



Photo 1. Side view of worker, yellow crazy ant, *Anoplolepis gracilipes*.



Photo 2. View from above of worker, yellow crazy ant, *Anoplolepis gracilipes*.



Photo 3. Front of head of worker, yellow crazy ant, *Anoplolepis gracilipes*.



Photo 4. Side view of queens, yellow crazy ant, *Anoplolepis gracilipes*.

AUTHOR Grahame Jackson

Information from CABI *Anoplolepis gracilipes* (yellow crazy ant) (2018) Invasive Species Compendium. (<https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/5575>); and Pacific Invasive Ant Toolkit. (<http://piat.org.nz>); and *Anoplolepis gracilipes*. AntWiki. (http://www.antwiki.org/wiki/Anoplolepis_gracilipes); and AntWeb. (<https://www.antweb.org/description.do?genus=anoplolepis&species=gracilipes&rank=species&project=allantwebants>); and from *Anoplolepis gracilipes* (2018). Global Invasive Species Database. (<http://www.iucngisd.org/gisd/speciesname/Anoplolepis+gracilipes>). Photos 1-3 Ken Walker (2005) Yellow crazy ant (*Anoplolepis gracilipes*): PaDIL - (<https://www.padil.gov.au/>). Photo 4 Amy Carmichael (2005) Yellow crazy ant (*Anoplolepis gracilipes*). Queensland University of Technology, PaDIL - (<http://www.padil.gov.au/>).

Produced with support from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research under project HORT/2016/185: *Responding to emerging pest and disease threats to horticulture in the Pacific islands*, implemented by the University of Queensland and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

Copyright © 2022. All rights reserved.



Australian Government
Australian Centre for
International Agricultural Research



Web edition hosted at <https://apps.lucidcentral.org/pppw>