

Rover ants

Rover ants are tiny (~1/16" long) and brownish-black. They have 9 antennal segments which can differentiate them from many other ants, but you'll need a good hand lens or microscope to count antennal segments. The abdomen of rover ants is pudgy and the ants have a "humpbacked" appearance.



Colonies, or nests, are small and have a single queen. They are often seen outside nesting under or inside of flower pots, under stones or other landscaping material, or running up and down areas like patio furniture or the foundation of the home. If rover ants find their way indoors, they can be found usually in areas of moisture- kitchen, bathrooms, and near plumbing leaks.

Rover ants do tend honeydew-producing insects, so may be found on plants. If you discover them on a plant, you need to look for other insects such as aphids, mealybugs, or scale insects as that will be the true source of damage to the plant. The ants will protect the honeydew-producing insect from predators and parasites, but they do not cause direct harm to the plant.

Rover ants can be difficult to manage at times since they can be a bit persnickety about bait products. They do seem to take liquid baits fairly well, but you may need to try several kinds of bait before finding one that will work best for your ants. Sprays should not be used to treat for rover ants since this can split the colony up and make the ants more difficult to manage.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

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