



## Media Center

## FACT SHEET

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## FORMOSAN SUBTERRANEAN TERMITES

- Formosan Subterranean termites threaten homes and other structures in Hawaii and southern continental United States.
  - Originally from mainland China, Formosans have been in the United States approximately 50 years.
  - They are more vigorous and aggressive than native termites, and have been known to displace native populations.
- The Formosan termite has been called the "Super termite" because of its large colonies and its ability to consume wood in a relatively short time.
  - A mature Formosan termite colony can number in the millions, consume as much as 13 ounces of wood per day, and can severely damage a structure in as little as three months.
  - A Formosan colony can forage an area more than one acre in diameter.
  - Soldiers comprise about ten percent of the colony.
- Formosan subterranean termites are most visible during their swarming or mating.
- Formosans are typically active in the evening and later in the year (May-June) than native termite species.
- Formosan queens can produce 1,000 eggs a day.

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- As Formosans infest a structure, they use soil and wood cemented together with saliva and feces to build hard nests called cartons. These can be located in trees or within walls.
  - Large cartons can actually cause walls to bulge.
  - These nests can house thousands of termites as well as provide moisture to the colony.
  - Once established, colonies can live without direct soil contact.
- Formosan termites can also infest, damage and possibly destroy otherwise healthy trees.
- The Termite Institute™, online at [www.TermitelInstitute.com](http://www.TermitelInstitute.com), features an interactive map with localized information on termite prevalence by state. Simply click on any state to find out if Formosan termites are active.