

# Yellow Crazy Ants

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the Council's Yellow Crazy Ant (YCA) Program?

Yellow Crazy Ants were first identified in the Whitsunday region in 2019 at Shute Harbour. There are now seven YCA infestations in the Whitsunday region covering approximately 45ha.

There is a Whitsunday Yellow Crazy Ant Management Committee with stakeholders from various government agencies overseeing the program. The aim of the program is to eradicate the YCA. Funding for the program has varied over time with some State Government money and Council funding.

### Where do Yellow Crazy Ants nest?

Yellow Crazy Ants construct their nests in a variety of locations, often choosing ground-level sites with access to water or moisture. Their nests can be found:

- in and under soil,
- beneath woody debris and rocks,
- at the base of trees, and
- under leaf litter.

In urban environments, these ants have been observed nesting in:

- rock walls,
- garden beds, and
- mulch.



Yellow Crazy Ant nest

### How can I identify Yellow Crazy Ants?

Yellow Crazy Ants are small, invasive insects with long legs and antennae. They typically measure around 5mm in-length and have a yellow to brown abdomen, sometimes with dark stripes. They are also known for erratic and rapid movements. The ants can be identified by the photo below. These ants are slightly smaller than the common Green Ant.



### Why must Yellow Crazy Ants be managed?

Yellow Crazy Ants pose a significant threat to biodiversity and ecosystems. Their aggressive behaviour disrupts native ecosystems. These ants consume other ants, insects, lizards, frogs, birds and smaller mammals. Additionally, their formic acid spray can harm animals and humans. Effective management is crucial to protect biodiversity and human health.

Yellow Crazy Ant infestations can impact people's lifestyle, house value and pets.

### What would be the impact on other species if left untreated?

Left untreated, Yellow Crazy Ants pose a significant threat to native ecosystems. They outcompete native species, disrupt biodiversity, and impact food webs. This can lead to declines in native ants, other invertebrates, and small vertebrates, with far-reaching ecological consequences.

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### What type of pesticide is used to control Yellow Crazy Ants?

Fipronil-based insecticides are commonly used to control YCAs. These insecticides target the ant's nervous system, suppressing population growth. Granular baits like ANTOFF and hydrogels are often used.

### Will the pesticide affect my pets?

The pesticide used to control Yellow Crazy Ants are generally low-risk to pets. The active ingredient is the same pesticide used in dog flea collars and to treat termites.

### Where, when and how will the pesticide be applied?

A Whitsunday Regional Council representative will apply the pesticide to your yard as part of a coordinated baiting program. The pesticide will not be applied inside your home, to swimming pools, or other water features. You do not need to be at home when the treatment occurs, as long as your yard is accessible. After the treatment, the Council representative will leave a notification to confirm its completion.

### How many times will my property need to be treated?

Your property will be treated three times per year for three to five years. This means approximately nine (and up to 15) treatments in total. These ants are difficult to eradicate!

### What should I do after my property has been treated?

Avoid watering or irrigating treated areas for 24 hours. Do not apply surface sprays to your garden as this may reduce the effectiveness of the bait. It is important that the ants take the bait back to the nest and queen ants.

### How can I manage my green waste if my property is in an infested area?

Green waste from infested areas should be disposed of at designated waste management facilities. Avoid illegal dumping to prevent the spread of ants to new areas. If you are taking a trailer of green waste, you can spray the material with a common surface spray from grocery stores (about \$5 a can).

### I have a small gardening business. How can I treat green waste taken from infested areas?

To safely handle green waste from infested areas, and prevent the spread of YCAs to new areas, please follow these steps:

- Thoroughly inspect the green waste for any visible ants.
- Apply a surface spray insecticide to the green waste to eliminate any potential ants.
- Responsibly dispose of the treated green waste at an approved waste management facility.



Application of pesticide to infestation area



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### What can I do to support the eradication program?

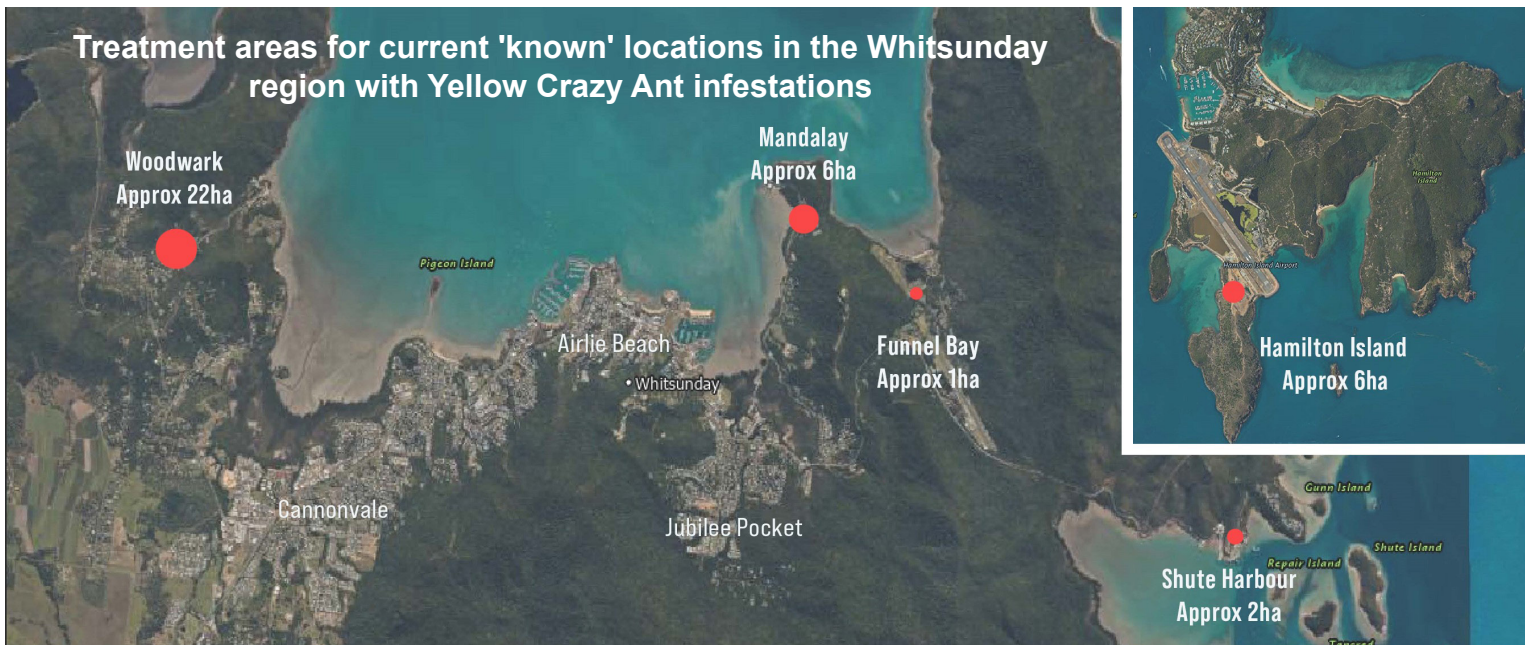
- Report signs of Yellow Crazy Ants to the Council
- Dispose of waste responsibly. Only dispose of vegetation and soil at approved council sites after treatment. Council monitors our landfill and waste transfer stations for the pest ants.
- When moving pot plants, treat them with a surface spray insecticide to prevent the spread of ants.



### How can I help?

To assist Whitsunday Regional Council with the eradication program, please:

- Grant access for Council to access your property.
- Avoid disturbing treated areas for a few days to allow ants to collect the bait.
- Prevent spreading YCAs by avoiding moving soil or vegetation that may contain ants off your property.
- Refrain from treating your yard with additional treatments yourself to maximise the effectiveness of the program.
- Coordinated baiting is the best approach – where pesticide is applied in one day over the whole area.



## MORE INFORMATION

For more information about Yellow Crazy Ants or to report a sighting:

- Visit [www.whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au](http://www.whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au),
- Phone 1300 972 753 or
- Email [info@wrc.qld.gov.au](mailto:info@wrc.qld.gov.au).

