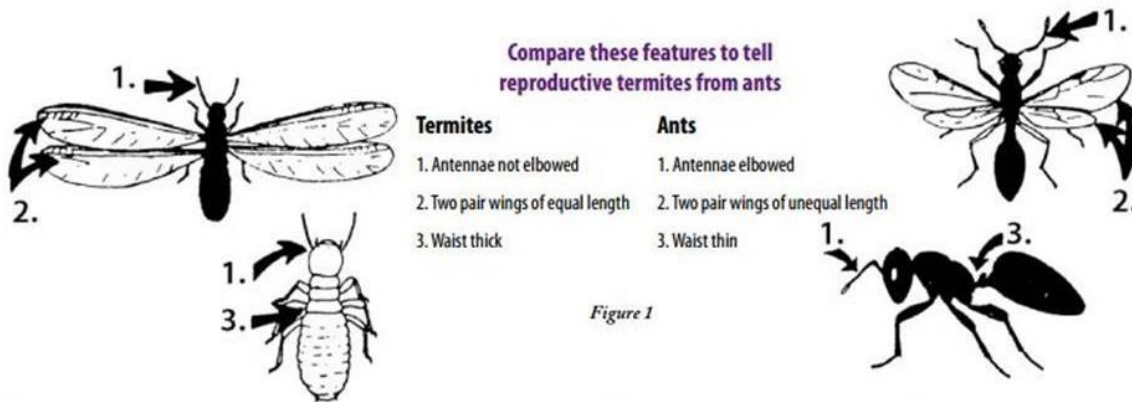


Ant and Termite Swarms

April is usually the month that most ant and/or termite swarms occur. Thus, it is extremely important to distinguish between an ant and a termite. Ant swarms have already been noted (5 April) this year with more to come. Both ants and termites are very common throughout Kansas although the damage potential and treatments costs are significantly different. Therefore, proper identification is extremely important!



If the swarm is determined to be ants, the next question is whether they are carpenter ants. Most of our ants are scavengers and therefore won't really cause a problem, other than being a nuisance. Carpenter ants are also scavengers; however, they do excavate and nest in soft woods including plywood, plasterboard, insulation, wood affected by water seepage, etc. Unlike termites, they do not consume wood and wood products. Carpenter ants range in size from 1/4 inch to nearly 1 inch long and may be reddish to black in color, making them look very similar to many other ant species in Kansas. For many, the easiest characteristic to positively identify carpenter ants is the tiny ring of hairs on the very end of the abdomen, which may require a hand lens to see. Treatment for carpenter ants, as with most ants, is most effective by locating and treating the nest.



Showing red and black carpenter ants

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For more information on ants, including carpenter ants, please see *Ants*, MF-2887:

<https://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf2887.pdf>

For more information on termites, please see *Termites*, MF-722:

<https://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf722.pdf>

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