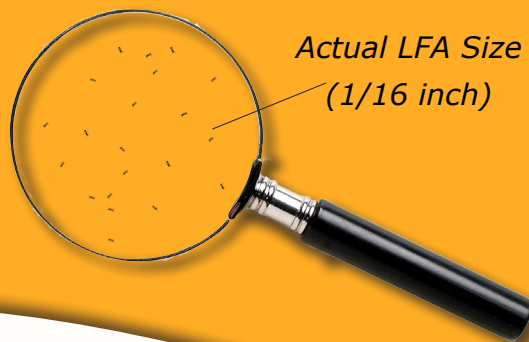


What is the Little Fire Ant?

Little Fire Ant (LFA), is an **invasive stinging ant that is spreading across the Hawaiian islands.**



Eli Samat



Actual LFA Size

(1/16 inch)

Little Fire Ant

Wasmannia auropunctata

Know them. Report them. Stop them. Know them. Name them. Report them. Stop them.

The first infestations of LFA were discovered on Hawai'i island in 1999. LFA have hitchhiked on material from infested areas and are now spreading across the Big Island. Newly introduced and controllable colonies of LFA have been found on Kaua'i and Maui.



Ellen Van Gelder, USGS

LFA on a chopstick

LFA are **small, slow-moving ants**, averaging 1/16" in size. They are as long as a penny is thick.

LFA **nest in trees and in leaf litter on the ground.** They do **not** form mounds.

Report Suspected LFA IMMEDIATELY!

Hawai'i Department of Agriculture
Statewide Hotline: 643-PEST (7378)

O'ahu

O'ahu Invasive Species Committee:
266-7994

Maui

Maui Invasive Species Committee:
573-6472

Kaua'i

Kaua'i Invasive Species Committee:
821-1490

Moloka'i

Moloka'i Invasive Species Committee:
553-5236

Big Island

Big Island Invasive Species Committee:
933-3340

Stop the spread of the little fire ant (LFA) in Hawai'i



Hawaii Department of Agriculture

Help protect Hawai'i

Know them. Name them.
Report them. Stop them.

Little Fire Ant

Impacts to Hawai'i

Quality of life: LFA deliver a powerful sting causing large, painful welts. Welts can last days, followed by an intense itching sensation. These stinging ants will infest yards, gardens, and homes.

Domesticated animals: Stings to pets and livestock can lead to blindness.

Agriculture: LFA invade agricultural areas and nurseries making exporting of goods difficult. The ants sting farm workers and flower pickers and reduce plant health.

Wildlife: Elsewhere in the world, little fire ants are attacking and killing the hatchlings of ground-nesting birds and sea turtles.

Identifying LFA

LFA characteristics:

- Tiny ants: 1/16 inch, as long as a penny is thick
- Yellow-red in color
- Slow-moving

Misidentification:

- Don't confuse LFA with the tropical fire ant. The tropical fire ant is a common stinging ant in Hawai'i. The tropical fire ant is 3-times the size of LFA.



*Tropical fire ant (top)
compared to LFA (bottom)*

USDA

LFA Stings

LFA most often sting people's neck, arms, and upper torso.

LFA easily fall off disturbed branches and leaves, stinging those who brush by.



*LFA deliver a powerful sting
causing large, painful welts*

How does LFA spread?

LFA hide in shipments from infested areas. They can hitchhike undetected into yards, homes, and businesses.

Caution should also be taken as they can accidentally spread by hiding in clothing and gear.

An entire LFA colony can fit inside a macadamia nut shell. The ants can build colonies in any small empty cavity: under or in logs, branches, plant debris, rocks, or even inside furniture.



LFA colony in leaf litter

Chris Reickert

TAKE ACTION: Help protect Hawai'i!

Join the Sting Operation. Test new soil, plants, mulch, or other landscaping materials, and any items that have been stored in known infestation zones.

Testing is as easy as a chopstick and peanut butter. Go to www.lfa-hawaii.org to find more information on detecting and testing for new introductions of LFA.