

# White footed ants

## *Technomyrmex* spp.

*Technomyrmex* is a genus of ants in the subfamily Dolichoderinae. With 98 species, it is one of the largest and most diverse ant genera in the Dolichoderinae. The genus distributed throughout the tropical and subtropical zones with most species occurring in the Oriental-Malesian and Afrotropical regions. One species, *Technomyrmex albipes* is an invasive ant now widespread throughout the tropics due to human activities.

Identification of the *Technomyrmex albipes* requires expert examination as there are several other species that are similar. Many specimens previously identified as *Technomyrmex albipes* have subsequently been reidentified as *Technomyrmex difficilis* (difficult white-footed ant) or as *Technomyrmex vitiensis* (Fijian white-footed ant), which are already established in Australia.

### Where do they live?

White-footed ants infest both urban and rural habitats, as they spread to other areas through commerce, such as nursery stock and shipping containers. Preferred nesting sites are near moisture and food sources that also provide protection from predators and harsh environmental conditions.

Outdoors, this type of ant can likes to nest in moist microenvironments, including under loose bark or rocks, in decaying tree trunks and branches, and in old termite galleries. In homes, white-footed ants can be found nesting in wall voids, attics, under roof shingles, around skylights, and in kitchens and bathrooms.



### What do I look for?

The pointed abdomen of white-footed ants is quite distinctive. The lower half of their legs is contrastingly light compared to the rest of their body. Inside houses they search in long trails for water.

### What can I do?

If you suspect that you have found ants that are exotic contact Biosecurity SA or the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline.



**Disclaimer:** The material in this publication was prepared from the most up-to-date information available at the time of publication. It is intended as a guide only and the publisher accepts no responsibility

July 2020