

## BROWSING ANTS (*Lepisiota frauenfeldi*)

The Browsing Ant (*Lepisiota frauenfeldi*) is an ant-eating species that forms super-colonies that can displace native ant species and most other invertebrates in the area of infestation.

Browsing ant is not native to Australia and is a serious environmental pest. It can form super colonies that eat and displace native ant species, as well as other insects. The colonies can also damage plants and landscaping.

National response programs are underway in the Northern Territory (NT), Queensland (QLD) and Western Australia (WA) to eradicate infestations of Browsing ant. All of the programs are on track to achieve eradication.

It most likely arrived from Timor Leste or Malaysia – both have strong trade links to Australia.

### ABOUT BROWSING ANTS

Browsing ant is a slender ant, and is a consistent shiny dark brown in colour. It is 3–4mm in length with long antennae and long legs, and runs about in a crazy or haphazard manner when disturbed.

It forms super colonies, reaching large numbers and will be noticeable on the ground as well as in trees, leaf litter and infrastructure such as electrical boxes. It farms and protect scale insects which can eventually kill the plants it lives on, and it eats and displaces native ant species as well as other insects. The immediate impacts of browsing ant are considered to be environmental. However, the species' ability to farm scale insects and the subsequent effects on plant health, indicates risk to agriculture and horticulture of national significance.

Browsing ant is commonly found in the Mediterranean, Southern Europe, Western Asia and North Africa.



At just 4mm in length, the browsing ant is tiny, but an outbreak could have huge consequences for Australia's farming community and our natural environment. Photo: Shannon Hartman - [www.antweb.org](http://www.antweb.org)

### REPORT BROWSING ANTS:

If you think you have seen Browsing Ants, contact the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline: 1800 084 881

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

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