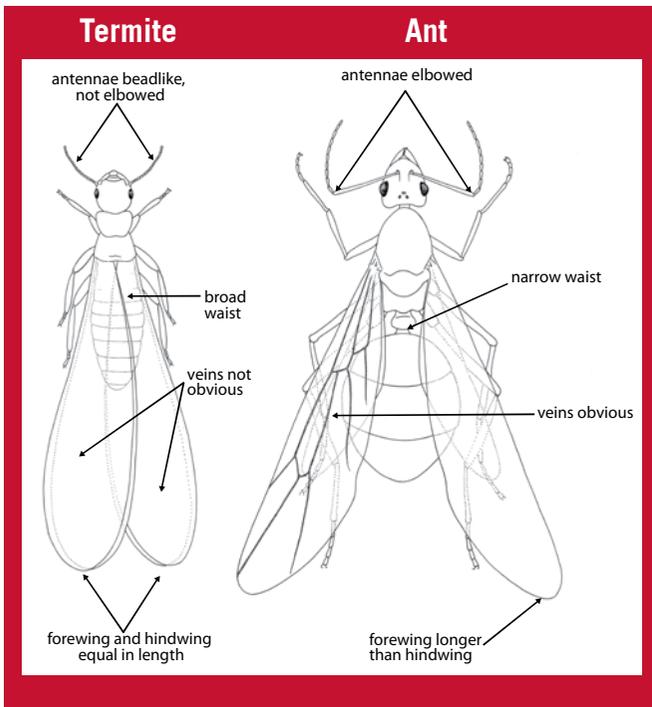
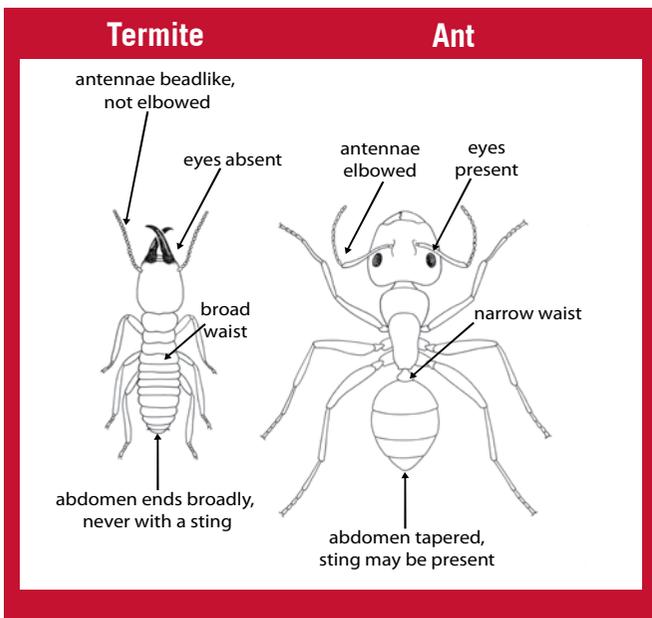


# Termite or ant?

## Reproductives (alates)



## Soldiers/Workers



## What should you do?

You can help keep Australia free from exotic termites by regularly inspecting your vessel for signs of termite activity, and having your vessel inspected regularly by a qualified pest control operator.

Be cautious if you're buying a second-hand vessel; it could be infested without the seller's knowledge. Quarantine inspectors have found serious termite infestations on yachts that have been lived on and maintained for more than 20 years, before the pests became apparent.

If you have found termites, or you suspect your vessel may have termites, follow these steps:

1. try not to disturb the affected area
2. collect any evidence including frass, wings or termites themselves
3. contact your nearest AQIS office on the numbers below.



Australian Government

Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service

# Termite Alert!



## Contact AQIS

### Regional offices

Adelaide:	+61 8 8201 6000
Brisbane:	+61 7 3246 8755
Cairns:	+61 7 4030 7800
Darwin:	+61 8 8920 7000
Hobart:	+61 3 6233 3352
Melbourne:	+61 3 8318 6700
Perth:	+61 8 9334 1555
Sydney:	+61 2 8334 7444
Canberra	+61 2 6272 3933

Freecall (nearest AQIS office - Australia only)  
**1800 020 504**

[www.aqis.gov.au](http://www.aqis.gov.au)

02/2009

Do you have  
stowaways on  
board?

## What do termites look like?

Termites ('white ants') are usually small, pale and soft-bodied, and most forms are blind. Reproductive termites or 'alates' have glassy wings up to twice as long as the head and body. Termites live in colonies made up of workers, soldiers, a queen and alates.



## What types of termites are found?

**Subterranean termites** are usually found in soil, but some species can establish colonies in damp areas away from the ground. Colonies can grow to two million insects and produce more than 70 000 alates each breeding season.

Formosan termite (*Coptotermes formosanus*), a subterranean species found throughout Asia, is regarded as the world's most destructive termite. (right: soldier form)



**Drywood termites** get moisture from the wood they feed on. They attack dry wood and have small colonies of fewer than 3000 individuals. They are often accidentally transported in furniture or other wooden items, making them hard to find.

West Indian drywood termite (*Cryptotermes brevis*) is found in south-eastern Queensland. A million dollar eradication program is trying to rid Australia of this pest. (right: soldier form)



Western drywood termite (*Incisitermes minor*). Found throughout the United States, this pest causes millions of dollars worth of damage each year in California and Arizona. (right: soldier form)



## Where should you look?

Any wooden area of a hull or superstructure such as the mast, is prone to infestation, especially potentially damp areas next to pipes or water. If you can't repair or remove wood that's prone to dampness, check it regularly for weakness.

Termites can be active inside timber without revealing their presence and can feed on wood until only a thin shell of timber or paint remains.

## What should you look for?

**Frass** is the name given to termites' faecal pellets. Drywood termites produce smooth, hard pellets that are light to dark brown. They can commonly be mistaken for cockroach droppings.

**Note: image highly magnified**



Subterranean termite infestation won't be revealed by frass. These pests use soil, saliva and faecal matter to build their '**mud**' tunnels.



**Winged termites** (alates) often shed their wings near windows, doors or in corners. They are a good indicator that there may be termite activity on board.



## How can boats become infested?

From early spring through to autumn (fall), alates leave the colony at dusk to swarm and mate. After mating, they shed their wings and seek out a suitable place to start a new colony.

Boats make ideal homes for termites as many are built largely from timber and can have areas prone to dampness—favourable conditions for termites.

Termites can board vessels during mating flights, or they may already be present in infested timber items or building materials brought on board (eg furniture, timber boxes, timber building materials).

Check all timber furniture, and timber building materials closely, and avoid using timber storage containers.



## Renovating your boat?

Making repairs or undergoing renovations are ideal times to inspect for termites. Make sure you also inspect any timber related building materials that you bring on board during your renovations. If you are refitting your yacht while visiting Australia, please contact AQIS **before** you start.