

Subterranean Termites

QUICK STATS:



Color:

Creamy white to dark brown/black



Shape:

Long, narrow and oval



Size:

$\frac{1}{8}$ inch long



Region:

Found throughout the U.S.



Subterranean Termites



Family *Rhinotermitidae*

OVERVIEW:

Subterranean termite colonies are organized into castes depending on tasks – workers, soldiers and reproductives. The characteristics of a subterranean termite are dependent on the termite's role in the colony. Worker subterranean termites are $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{3}{8}$ inch long. Soldier subterranean termites are of a similar body length, but are distinguished by their powerful mandibles and large brown heads. Reproductive subterranean termites are approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long.

HABITS:

Subterranean termites live in underground colonies or in moist secluded areas above ground. They build distinctive "mud tubes" to gain access to food sources and to protect themselves from open air. Like other termite species, they feed on products containing cellulose. Subterranean termites swarm in the spring when groups of reproductive termites go off to start new colonies.

THREATS:

Subterranean termites are by far the most destructive termite species. The hard, saw-toothed jaws of termites work like shears and are able to bite off extremely small fragments of wood, one piece at a time. They can cause severe property damage.

PREVENTION:

- Divert water away from your home's foundation with properly functioning downspouts, gutters and splash blocks. Repair leaking faucets, water pipes and AC units on the outside of the home.
- Reduce humidity in crawl spaces, attics and basements with proper ventilation.
- Store firewood at least 20 feet away from the house and 5 inches off the ground.
- Keep mulch at least 15 inches from the foundation.
- Routinely inspect the foundation of your home for signs of mud tubes, cracked or bubbling paint and wood that sounds hollow when tapped.
- If you suspect a termite problem, contact a licensed pest professional right away.

DID YOU KNOW? Subterranean termites...

- live in colonies with as many as two million members.
- use their scissor-like jaws to eat wood 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- and other termite species cause a collective \$5 billion in property damage each year.

For more information, visit PESTWORLD.org

