

## **The Difference Between Flying Black Ants and Flying Termites**

When the humidity is high and conditions are just right termites can be found swarming. This swarming does not mean that they will attack your home and eat it, but you should be aware, there is an active nest nearby and their swarming is more secretive and slower in action and can be more permanent.

Flying termites are called alates, and differ from flying ants in many ways.

### **The smaller differences are:**

Termites have smokey to brown wings while ants have transparent wings of equal length.

Termites tend to flutter in flight and drift with the wind as they do not have very good flight control while ants have a lot of flight control and land and take off at will.

Termites are not white but their colour can vary from cream to black.

Termites wings will fall off when they land and look for a mate.

### **The procedure followed by alates is well defined:**

As termites need about 65% humidity to survive, the alates will only leave the nest on warm humid days or evenings, when they leave it is in mass and can be compared to smoke coming from the nest with thousand upon thousand flying at once, they drift with the wind currents until they land, most of the time after crashing. When on they land their wings fall off and the female emits a pheromone (sent) attract a male, once a pair have located each other they find the nearest place to burrow into the soil, mate and start a new colony.

The process works well in the wild. Usually the alates will crash into a tree and end up forming a nest at the base of the tree (a ready made food source). However when a building (which is much wider than a tree and more termites do crash into it) is involved, the termites usually end up under external concrete areas which provide food shelter from predators like black ants. The down side is that the building becomes the ready made food source.