



Our Insect Enemies



New Termite Species Invades South Florida

(NAPSA)—What's being done in South Florida today, may help the rest of the nation tomorrow.

Consider this: Non-native insects cause billions of dollars in damage each year in the United States. Now, the state of Florida is taking steps to ensure that a new, potentially damaging termite species from the Caribbean does not establish itself in this country.

The aggressive *Nasutitermes costalis* species of termites was found in South Florida in 2001. The species, called "tree termites" because of where they nest, is native to a number of islands in the Caribbean. According to the Florida Department of Agriculture, the termites feed on wood and wood products, and will consume structural elements of buildings and other wood. The Department believes the termites are currently confined to a 50-acre area, but could spread quickly due to human activity.

Unlike most termite species in the U.S., the tree termites are active above ground. This renders a number of termite control methods, like bait products, ineffective. Instead, the State is attempting to completely wipe out the pest population using Termidor®, a liquid termiticide/insecticide that has been used on over 800,000 homes since 2000. Applications of Termidor will be professionally applied directly to nests, as well as around the base of inhabited trees.

"There has never been a successful attempt to eradicate a social insect in the United States," comments Dr. Rudolf Scheffrahn of the University of Florida. "But we've been able to identify and closely track the activity of this



To prevent tree termites from branching out into the rest of the country, Florida is attempting to wipe them out completely.

new species since they were discovered. They are a good candidate for eradication."

Foreign termite species have caused significant damage in the United States over the past century. The most destructive of these species is the Formosan termite, which arrived in North America from the South Pacific. Formosan infestations cause up to \$1 billion in annual property damage.

Termidor was chosen because of its effectiveness in lab testing done specifically for the tree termite effort. "Field tests of Termidor in Puerto Rico show similar effectiveness when applied for tree termites," says Bob Hickman, Termidor researcher.

"Across the country, states are struggling to curb the spread of damaging foreign pests," notes Hickman. "Attacking these pests from the beginning is crucial in stopping the establishment of new pest species in this country."