Useful ant-idotes for tiny invaders

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CREEPING their way silently into houses and businesses, ants have made themselves an unwelcome sight across Ipswich.

Amalgamated Pest Control Ipswich branch manager Troy Mayes said ants had moved into buildings across the city, infesting houses, nursing homes and hospitals.

Mr Mayes said dry weather conditions earlier in the year had forced the pests to seek moisture and shelter outside of their natural environment and into houses, offices and other building structures such as sheds.

He said that the problem had now been exasperated with recent rain unsettling the ants and creating additional conditions suitable for them to adapt and survive.

“People should be mindful of ants occupying any area of their home or building where moisture build up occurs, but they should be extra careful inside kitchens where ants can wreak havoc on food stores and groceries,” Mr Mayes said.

“Common household ants such as black ants and green weaver ants, can carry diseases such as dysentery, and bacterial infections including salmonella.”

University of Queensland Entomologist Professor Bronwen Cribb said it was largely Queensland’s hot summer that was responsible for insect outbreaks.

“Insect activity is associated with temperature,” Professor Cribb said.

“Like snakes that hibernate in winter and become more active in the sun, insects breed more effectively in higher temperatures.

“When it’s wet, ants move to drier places to live.”

Common home remedies for getting rid of the unwanted little pests include sprinkling cinnamon, mint, chilli pepper, black pepper, cayenne pepper, cloves or garlic in the area where you’ve seen ants and along the home’s foundations.

The spices are said to give off a strong scent and consequently repel ants and other insects.

NATURAL ANT REMEDIES

- Wipe down your countertops and cupboards with a mixture of white vinegar and water.
- Mix Borax powder and half a teaspoon of sugar and put in an old margarine container.
- Draw a line of powder across the spot where ants are entering.
- Place bay leaves in cabinets, drawers and containers.
- Sprinkle used coffee grounds around the outside of your house.