

Argentine Ant Eradication Program to commence baiting

Norfolk Island Regional Council (NIRC) Argentine Ant Eradication Program staff and contractors work under the guidance of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) to conduct targeted baiting in Argentine ant infested areas. The Argentine Ant Eradication Program is funded through the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (DITRDC).

As part of the Norfolk Island Argentine Ant Eradication Program (AAEP), Norfolk Island Regional Council staff and contractors are about to commence ground and aerial treatments for Argentine Ants in Zone 9 (refer to map below).



Figure 1. Extent and location of known Argentine ant infestations on Norfolk Island as at June 2021. Green zones indicates zones that have undergone treatment and are now undergoing post-treatment assessments. Red zones are those that have not yet been treated and the ants remain untreated.

Greg Quinn, the Yamaha Fazer drone pilot has arrived on Norfolk Island and has started to aerially map the flight path with a smaller drone to establish flight paths prior to commencing aerial treatments from the 25th October. The Yamaha Fazer drone (see picture below) will distribute ant bait in dense vegetation and difficult to access terrain and will significantly increase the area that can be baited effectively. The methods have also been refined and trialed to ensure no misting will occur and numerous protocols have been identified that can eliminate the risk of bee death, including moving bee hives well away from the treatment area, and conducting treatments in conditions of appropriate wind strength and direction that limit potential exposure. The aerial baiting is an important step towards the eradication of Argentine Ants on Norfolk Island. Please note that no aerial video footage or photography will be taken as part of any drone work carried out as part of the Argentine Ant Eradication Program.



Figure 2 . Yamaha Fazer Drone

The AAEP team will also be commencing targeted ground baiting by hand or by tractor/truck with a motorised blower attached, in zone 9, in easier to access areas.

Community support of the program and its methods are critical for eradication to be achieved and we thank you for your cooperation. If you have any questions please contact Customer Care on 22244, who will put you in contact with the Argentine Ant Eradication Program staff.

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