



Times Remembered
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Ants

I read the article in the paper last week on the Asian Needle Ant. They have been in Kentucky since 2013 and in the US since the 1930s; they can give you a mighty painful sting. Mostly, they stay outside, preying on other ants and termites. But they do come inside too.

The only encounters I've had with ants have been picnic ants. That's what I call them. They can be aggravating too. They always show up

when there's food around, especially sweets.

The worst encounter I've had has been with fire ants when we were on a trip to North Carolina a number of years ago.

Before I retired from Blue Grass Depot I had to travel various places, (TDY), for training and conferences. This particular conference was held in the summer at Wilmington, North Carolina. Therefore, my family went with me, and we drove instead of flying. Tara, Steve and Bob accompanied me. This was a vacation for them while I was going to class and studying.

They spent the week touring battle ships, The USS North Carolina, deep sea fishing with Captain Shaw and sunning on Wrightsville Beach. Incidentally, Tara caught a Cobia fish that was huge . . . it weighed approximately fifty-five pounds and was forty-seven inches long. It was previously in the paper several years ago.

They had a great excellent vacation, happy as could be

and I passed the class with flying colors so we are heading to Kentucky. We left early on Friday morning and immediately we encountered road construction. We were almost out of Wilmington when the riding got rough; it sounded like we were getting a flat tire. Steve was driving, pulled off the road and he and Bob got out to check the noise, and yes the tire was flat. We must have picked up a nail during the detour.

The big guys retrieved the spare tire, the jack, the lug wrench and Steve crawled under the vehicle to loosen the lugs, but he didn't stay on the ground long. He jumped up like a Bamjee Chicken flapping his arms and yelling something has got me. A tsunami of fire ants covered his back. He was doing the Watusi to say the least and he received many bites. Steve has very fair skin and insects that bite him make larger whelps than most people. His back and arms looked terrible. In the process, Bob got stung several times on the legs. But he didn't have the reaction

like Steve did. Tara gave him some Benadryl and it helped. You definitely do not want to have an encounter with fire ants.

These ants originally came to this country on cargo ships at the port of Mobile in the 1930s but sneaked around awhile before being discovered in 1942. How they went unnoticed for so long I don't know, because being stung by one, you are likely to be stung by the whole congregation. Like Steve did.

The fire ant is something else entirely. If you catch a June bug in your hands to look at it, it will not call in 3,000 of its closest friends to try to sting you to death. The fire ants inject an alkaloid venom just to be mean. I'm glad we don't have them here. They can just stay in the South. I been told the best way to get rid of them is to knock off the top of the mound with a shovel, pour in the gas, set it on fire, and beat them to death as they come out the top. Don't let one get away and run up your britches leg!

Whew!

top ten

HOUSEHOLD PESTS

1. Ants
2. Termites
3. Cockroaches
4. Rodents
5. Earwigs
6. Millipedes
7. Silverfish
8. Paper Wasps
9. Fleas
10. Bees



Source: HomeTeam Pest Defense

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