

Wasmannia auropunctata, little fireant, established in French Polynesia and control measures

The little fireant, *Wasmannia auropunctata*, was reported in July 2004 on the municipality of Mahina, Tahiti. Its entry was probably as early as 1999.



Photo IRD

The spreading areas of the little fireant have been mapped. Wooden sticks bearing a number and smeared with some peanut butter are stuck in the ground every 50 steps and the coordinates recorded with a GPS. The baits are taken and inspected after 45 to 60 minutes.

On the municipality of Mahina, 5 infested areas have been delimited :

1. the SuperMahina housing estate (88 ha)
2. in the MahinaRama housing estate, 4 infested areas (22 ha)
3. the bottom of the Atima housing estate (11.5 ha)
4. the bottom of the Tuauru valley (7.2 ha)
5. the bottom of the Oviri housing estate, linked to the Jay housing estate (12.8 ha)

An infestation corridor links the SuperMahina housing estate to the Ahonu valley (5.2 ha)

On the municipality of Papenoo, the hill located on the mouth of the east branch of the river is infested (10.1 ha).

On the municipality of Punaauia, 4 infested areas have been recorded :

1. the Putoa valley, about level with the footbridge stretching across the Route des plaines, by the Punavai housing estate (12.7 ha)
2. 3 plots of the Te Tavake housing estate, above the town hall
3. a small area at the Pointe des Pêcheurs, including part of the Meridien Hotel (2.9 ha)
4. the bottom of the Maru Ata housing estate, kilometre stone 17 (6.7 ha)

Treatment campaign (4 to 29 July 2005) :

There is an estimated area of 179 ha that need to be treated. Amdro (hydramethylnon on broken rice soaked with vegetable oil) is evenly spread at a rate of 5 kg per ha. The small infested areas (less than 15 ha) are treated on their whole surface. The Super Mahina housing estate is first treated around the borders (50 meters outside the infested limits and 100 meters inside the infested area).

A second mapping will be done from September 15th on and a second treatment campaign will take place in October in the areas that are still infested. This process will be repeated every 45 days during the dry season.