



Texas Imported Fire Ant Research and Management Project

Final Progress Report - October 2001

Imported Fire Ant Survey

Principal investigator:

Lawrence E. Gilbert
Section of Integrative Biology
University of Texas
Austin, TX 78712-1064
Email: lgilbert@mail.utexas.edu

Other participants:

Richard Patrock, Post-doctoral fellow
Technician: N. Plowes

Funding Amount/2 Years: \$60,000

Summary of Work:

1. A yearly survey in 16 current uninfested counties bordering the federal Imported Fire Ant Quarantine region in Texas for the presence of new populations of imported fire ants.
2. A microgeographical survey of imported fire ants and other ants along the leading and internal edges of the imported fire ant invasion fronts in central and south Texas.
3. The development and implementation of a school-based survey of native and imported ants

Major accomplishments to date (Sept. 1, 1999 through Aug. 31, 2001):

- We established new county records for RIFA in five (5) counties in Central Texas.
- We established new county records for native fire ants (*S. geminata*, *S. aurea* and *S. xyloni*) in five (5), one and one counties, respectively).
- We have incorporated our survey information into the FASIMS data base.
- We designed a genus and a species key to the ants of Brackenridge Field Laboratories. (<http://www.utexas.edu/research/bfl/collections/antkey.pdf>)
- We sponsored an Ant Identification workshop at Brackenridge Biological Station in May 2000 for local high school biology teachers.

Goals achieved:

We completed our 2000 and 2001 annual TDA survey for fire ants in 16 counties.

Relevance to the Texas Imported Fire Ant Research Ant Management Project:

Survey information about exotic and native ant distributions are useful along two avenues: 1) to help the Texas Dept. Agriculture (TDA) meet the survey, quarantine and regulatory activities identified in the state imported fire ant initiative, and 2) to help locate research sites for ant community interaction studies, as well as potential phorid biological control release and monitoring locations.

Presentations (web): <http://www.utexas.edu/research/bfl/collections/antkey.pdf>