

The Seasonal Life Cycle of the Imported Fire Ant, *Solenopsis saevissima richteri*, on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi.

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Abstract

During 1968, examinations of over 150 mounds of the imported fire ant, *Solenopsis saevissima richteri* Forel (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) were made in the vicinity of Gulfport, Mississippi. The ant was shown to have a yearly developmental cycle that started in early March with the beginning of egg laying and continued until November, when the disappearance of most of the brood indicated an end to the cycle. Alate forms were most abundant in early spring, reaching a peak of 9% of the colony biomass in June. Production of alate forms decreased steadily during the summer and ceased around September. Overwintering alates formed 1–2% of the colony biomass between November and May. Worker production began in March with peaks observed in May and October. During the developmental season, 19.6% of the total colony biomass was comprised of brood.

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