

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER/WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

Formosan Subterranean Termite (*Coptotermes formosanus*)

Distribution: Native to China. Established in several tropical and subtropical regions of the world. In the U.S.: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas. In California: an isolated population of *C. formosanus* exists in San Diego Co.

Damage: One of the most destructive structural pests in the U.S. Known to attack various wood products, as well as many living trees and shrubs. Large colony size (several million individuals), long foraging range (<100 m), and high reproductive activity (<1000 eggs per day) make *C. formosanus* a serious threat to infested buildings. Colonies are typically located in the ground with galleries extending into surrounding wood. Aerial infestations (with no soil connection) can be found in places where adequate moisture and food are available.

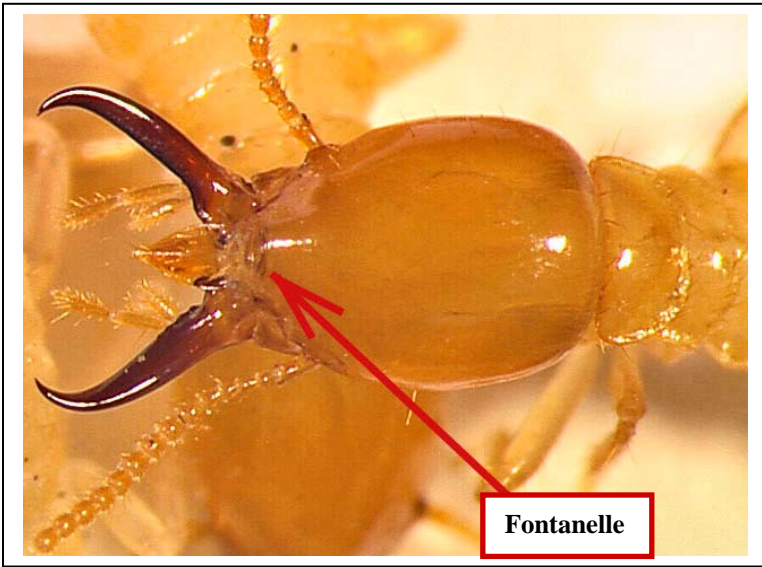
Field ID: Reproductives (alates) (about 12-15 mm long, including wings) have yellowish-brown bodies. Wings are pale, translucent, and covered with numerous fine hairs. Basal part of the wing with 2 strong veins. Head with relatively large ocelli and a small fontanelle.

Soldiers have cream-colored bodies and light brown, oval heads. Mandibles are long, curved with no teeth. When defend their colony, soldiers emit a white sticky secretion from the fontanelle (located at the anterior margin of the head). **Workers** are difficult to distinguish from other termite species and are of little value for identification.

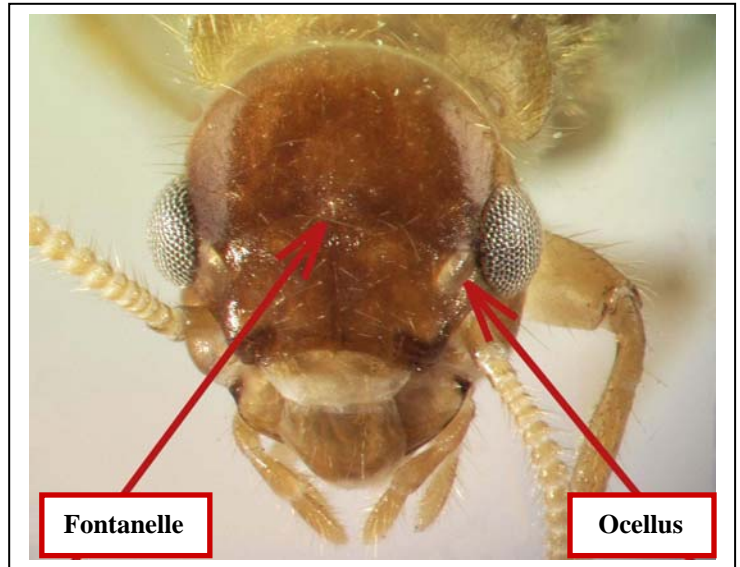


Soldiers and workers

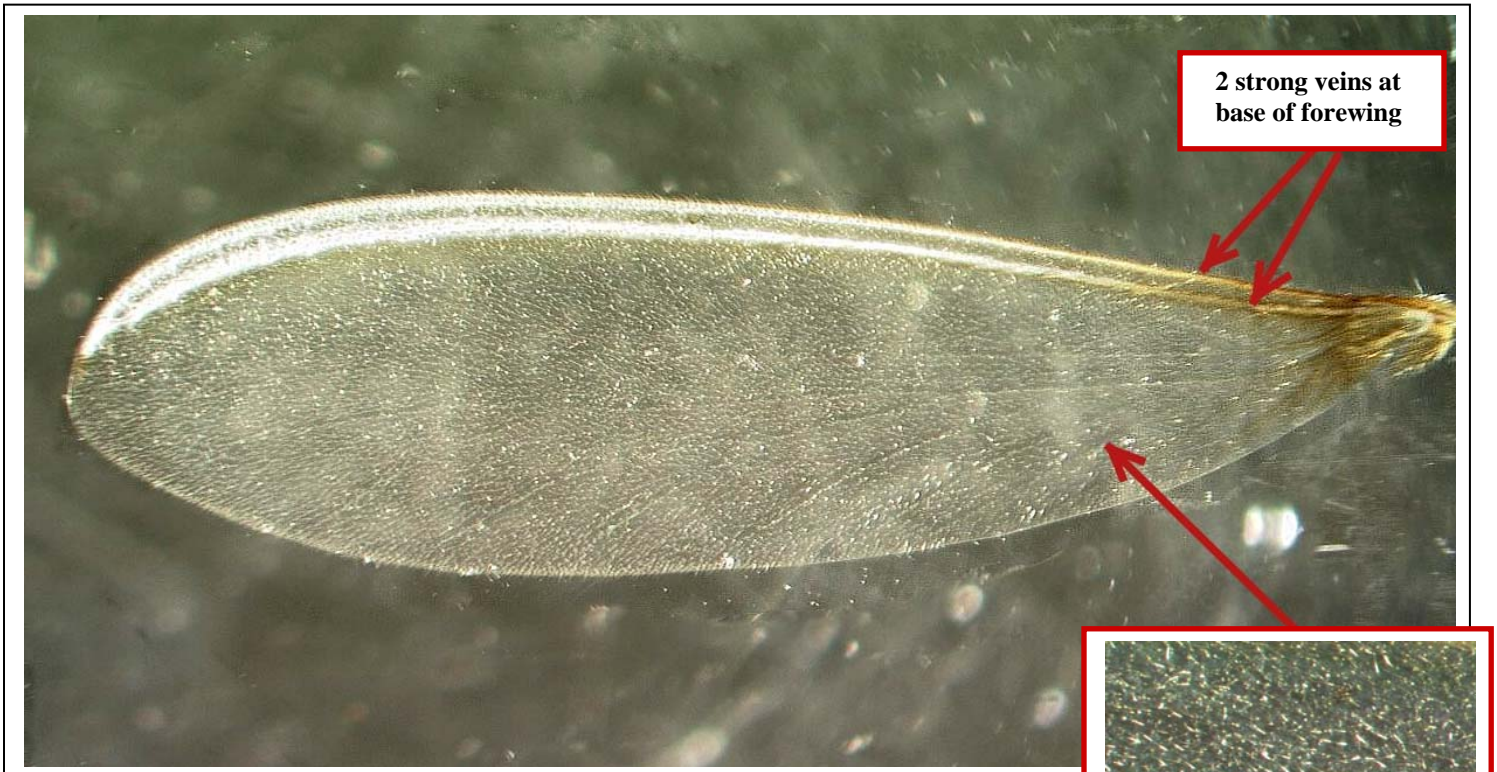
Photo by G. Arakelian



Head of the soldier



Head of the reproductive (alate)



Forewing of the reproductive (alate)

Numerous fine hairs