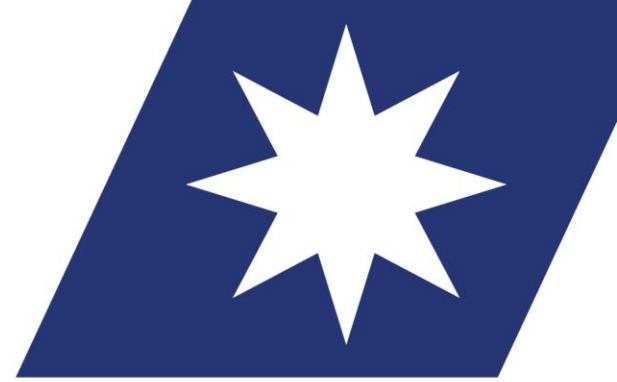


ROBBIE KATTER

Member for Traeger



MEDIA RELEASE

March 23, 2021

HOMES AT RISK THANKS TO IMPORTED ANTS: KATTER

Residents of Queensland's remote Gulf of Carpentaria communities are concerned they are being eaten out of house and home by none other than the invasive, and introduced, Singapore Ants species.

The Singapore Ants, which build large nests and are known to damage fabric, plastic, electrical wire and rubber materials with its chewing, have reportedly been running rampant in Gulf towns like Normanton.

Preferring tropical climates, the species has in the past been confirmed in the Gulf and Cape York as well as the Atherton Tablelands.

However, they can be found almost anywhere across Australia.

Katter's Australian Party Leader and Traeger MP Robbie Katter said during a recent trip to the Gulf, numerous residents raised with him their concerns about damage caused to the electrical wiring in their homes by Singapore Ants.

Mr Katter said he had flagged the issue with Ergon Energy, but that the company were not aware of any serious, localised concerns.

"We are seeing an increasing number of imported species, like the Singapore Ants and the Fall Army Worm, essentially breaching our biosecurity measures and posing a significant threat to our environment and ecosystems," he said.

"Obviously with this species there is that added danger of the threat posed to properties, so this is certainly something we don't want to leave unchecked.

"As biosecurity officer resources have declined in regional areas, incidences of introduced pests and weeds has increased.

"This is arguably a direct consequence of not providing the resources to these types of constant threats."

Singapore ants can chew through fabrics, rubber and plastics to source food.

They pose significant risk through their ability to damage electrical insulation and electrical components of homes, cars and electrical appliances. In the past they have been known to cause house fires.

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Mr Katter said he remained concerned about the prevalence of the ants in the region, and urged anyone who came across them to report them to their local councils and Biosecurity Queensland.

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