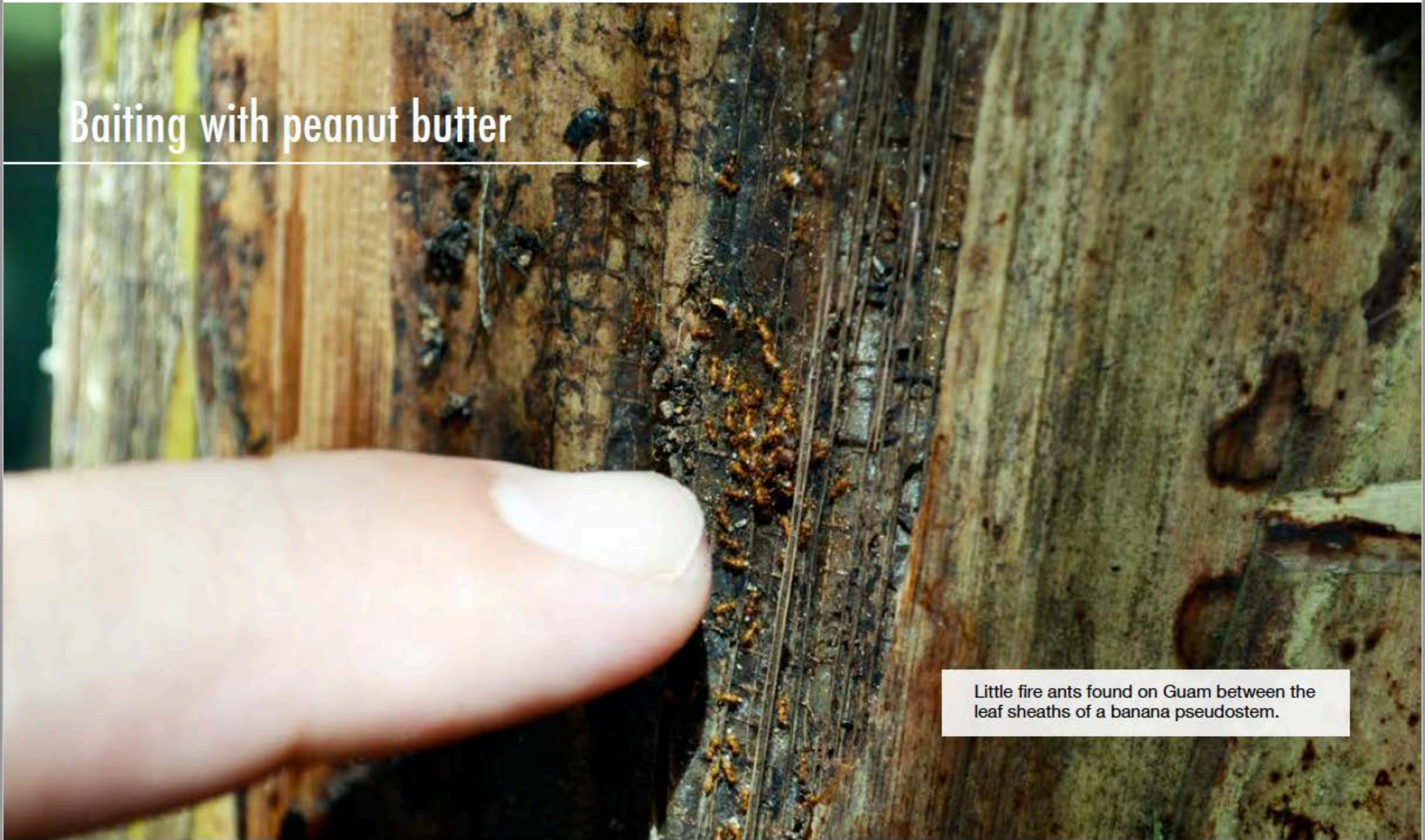


## Baiting with peanut butter



Little fire ants found on Guam between the leaf sheaths of a banana pseudostem.

**D**r. Ross Miller and his merry band of one, Dave Mantanona, have been placing chopsticks with peanut butter around Guam to detect the presence of *Wasmannia auropunctata*, the little fire ant. First found on Guam in 2011, Miller's lab has experienced success in eradicating this invasive ant from various forest, residential and park habitats.

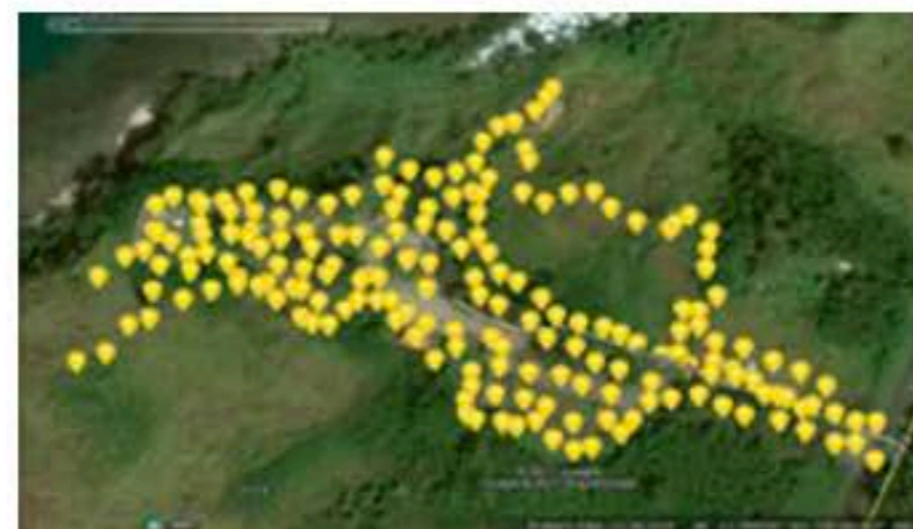
Using techniques developed by Casper Vanderwoude and his staff at the Hawaii Ant Lab and adapting them for Guam, Miller's lab has eradicated LFA from approximately 19 sites around the island. Infested areas are treated with a low toxicity granular bait called Siesta™. A second insecticide that interrupts the growth cycle of the ants, Tango®, is sprayed on tree trunks and leaves. One week later the team conducts a follow-up survey to check the effectiveness of the treatments, and then six weeks later both insecticides are reapplied and the site is again surveyed. Each site receives six to eight repeat treatments over a period of a year.

The area maps to the right show the efficacy of the treatments in eradicating pockets of little fire ant infestations on Guam. The red flags indicate LFA caught on peanut butter bait prior to treatment and the yellow flags indicate bait with no LFA present.

Mantanona is also assisting National Park Service staff with surveys and treatment of LFA infested sites in the Pacific National Park near Asan Point. This park is widely used by



Mapping of LFA at two sites in Umatac village: Fort Soledad and the Magellan Monument & Community Center Park showing the results of the initial delimiting survey (above). Flags in red indicate bait on which LFA were collected; yellow flags indicate sampling sites where no LFA were collected on the bait.



Chopsticks smeared with peanut butter were placed in a grid at approximately 5 m spacings. After the sixth treatment of insecticides (above), surveys showed a major reduction in the number of LFA.

Guam residents, so it is important to keep adults, children, and pets safe from the painful sting of LFA.

"This invasive ant is spread by humans moving it around the island when sharing potted plants or indiscriminately dumping green waste or garbage," said Miller. He would like everyone to remember that invasive species are everyone's responsibility!

*Funded by US Forest Service*

Ross Miller  
(671) 735-2068  
millerr@triton.uog.edu