



sustainability through
science and innovation

Collecting and sending insects for identification

For reliable identification, specimens should be undamaged and in an appropriate developmental stage. Some species show considerable variation in size, colour, shape and appearance between males and females so where possible 10-15 fresh specimens should be collected.

Specimen preparation

Live samples are easier to identify and therefore this is the preferred method of receiving specimens.

- For fresh specimens, place them in a non-crushable plastic container with small pinholes in the lid for ventilation. A small quantity of food on which the insects were feeding should be placed in the jar with a piece of tissue to absorb excess moisture.
- Soil-dwelling animals can be placed in moist soil with the container topped up with crumpled paper to minimise damage by shaking.
- If strong-jawed predatory insects such as ground beetles or scarab larvae are collected it is best to place them in separate jars as they may damage each other.

Where delays for correct identification are expected, the following preserving methods can be used:

- Hard-bodied insects can be killed and preserved in 70% alcohol or methylated spirits. Never use water.
- Butterflies and moths should be killed by freezing or by placing them in an airtight glass container with a ball of tissue soaked in nail polish remover or acetone. After killing, place them gently in another container between layers of tissues.

Data collection

Adequate collection data is essential to aid in successful identification and also for the specimen should it remain in an Insect Collection for future reference. To assist us, please fill out a **cesar Insect report form** and include this with your sample.

Sending samples

Where possible, samples should be sent via express post. Do not send samples towards the end of the week, over the weekend, or close to extended public holiday periods such as Christmas and Easter. Once samples have been posted, please notify us via email at pestfacts@cesaraustralia.com or by phone on 03 9349 4723. This will ensure your samples are processed in a timely manner.

Samples should be addressed to:

cesar ID service
293 Royal Parade, Parkville, VIC 3052