



The Ants

Bert Hölldobler, Edward O. Wilson

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This landmark work, the distillation of a lifetime of research by the world's leading myrmecologists, is a thoroughgoing survey of one of the largest and most diverse groups of animals on the planet. Hölldobler and Wilson review in exhaustive detail virtually all topics in the anatomy, physiology, social organization, ecology, and natural history of the ants. In large format, with almost a thousand line drawings, photographs, and paintings, it is one of the most visually rich and all-encompassing views of any group of organisms on earth. It will be welcomed both as an introduction to the subject and as an encyclopedia reference for researchers in entomology, ecology, and sociobiology.

The Ants Details

Date : Published March 28th 1990 by Belknap Press (first published 1990)

ISBN : 9780674040755

Author : Bert Hölldobler , Edward O. Wilson

Format : Hardcover 746 pages

Genre : Science, Nonfiction, Biology, Environment, Nature

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From Reader Review The Ants for online ebook

Steven Peck says

If you only read one book on ants this year. Make it this one.

Douglas says

I'm looking at an incredible sleek, well designed creature, with smooth surfaces and tiny features that put a Ferrari to shame. It's got little grooves to tuck in antennas when fighting. Tiny chemical factories that produce everything from poison to identifying scents to all that are needed for reproductive and digestive processes.

And their society is organized for food gathering and processing. They link together to move heavy objects. They design complex structures. Explore their world and form organized fighting armies, while communicating silently.

Each page of this book left me in awe, but somehow the authors were immune. Instead presenting a book of half dry facts, and the other half an exercise to explain how all this could be explained by Darwinian theory.

The authors accept so much at face value either because it's not their field, or they are blind to molecular complexity of ordinary processes. For example, how can you write about all the different chemicals emitted by these tiny creatures without wondering how these tiny organs know how to produce chemicals that you or I would have difficulty creating in a fully equipped lab?

I know a science book shouldn't just scream about how amazing things are, but a touch of humility and wonder would be nice.

Jaime says

One of my Desert Island Books. I'd spend all my time becoming a self-taught myrmecologist!

Jen says

I think this book will permanently live on my coffee table, because it is way too big to read straight through, but perfect to peruse on occasion. Fun (and physically large enough) to share with a friend.

Ettore1207 says

La *summa* su questi meravigliosi insetti. Non credo esista nessun libro divulgativo migliore sull'argomento.

Se le formiche vi affascinano, leggetelo! E se non vi affascinano, leggetelo ugualmente: vi affascineranno!

Bioteo says

Formiche....quando sentiamo parlare o vediamo questi piccoli animaletti la maggior parte di noi resta indifferente o pensa subito come sterminarli per evitare che entrino in casa. Questo saggio, magistralmente scritto da due dei più grandi esperti mondiali di sociobiologia racconta un'altra storia che fa traballare la presunta dominanza e perfezione della specie Homo sapiens. Le formiche infatti sono un esempio sfolgorante della creatività del processo evolutivo che ha portato questo gruppo, nel giro di cento milioni di anni, a colonizzare e a dominare quasi tutti gli ecosistemi terrestri. Quando l'uomo non aveva ancora acquisito la propria identità specifica, le formiche avevano già avuto un'incredibile radiazione adattativa che le portò a sperimentare l'agricoltura, l'allevamento, una coesione sociale senza precedenti ma anche la guerra, le razzie e lo schiavismo. E' incredibile come l'uomo diventi piccolo piccolo di fronte ad un insetto che talvolta misura pochi millimetri....

Meredith says

The photographs clearly represent a labor of love for the entomologists who collaborated on this book. You will fall in love too. Who knew ants could be so fascinating?

Sanna Hyvönen says

This is one of the most amazing books I have read. I am intimidated by ants and thus have a huge hunger for information about them - and this book delivers!

Fantastic photography and the most high-level expertise imaginable. An absolute coffee-table topper.

I just wish I could afford a copy.

Ant Dude says

My parents got me huge heavy book when I was in junior/middle school! It was all technical to me, but I love ants so I cared not. :)

Tony says

THE ANTS. (1990). Bert Holldobler and Edward O. Wilson. *****.

Don't be fooled by the five-star rating. It was not a five-star rating for me, since most of the material in this heavy tome was way over my head, but a five-star meaning that it is the only book you will ever need to read

if you are studying ants – the science of myrmecology (my new word for the day). This is not just a coffee table book, it can also be used as a coffee table. The authors review, in exhaustive detail, all aspects of all topics in the anatomy, physiology, social organization, ecology, and natural history of ants. According to the flap, “(The) book illustrates each of the 292 living genera of ants – there are approximately 8,800 known species – and provides detailed taxonomic keys to them, region by region around the world.” If you are not a biologist, but do have a background in science – like me – you will be able to follow the authors’ work reasonably well, but will, probably – like me – skip over the hundreds of charts and tables that delve into the details of these little critters. Where did ants come from? We don’t know. It looks as if they had wasps of some type in their heritage, but fossil evidence is sparse. The oldest ant fossil (preserved in amber) was found to be approximately 80 million years old. It looks much the same as today’s ants. “The Ants,” again, according to the blurbs, is “the first fully comprehensive treatise on these insects since the beginning of this century...It will be welcomed both as an introduction (!!!) to the subject and as an encyclopedic reference for researchers...” This is highly recommended to those researchers out there. You know who you are.

Darin Stevenson says

This book is an astonishing reference and a monumental achievement. Anyone interested in social insects simply must have this, and The Insect Societies. I have been reading and re-reading it for 10 years. It is brilliant and peerless.

Tim says

You all made fun of me for buying and reading this. But look who knows more about ants than you do now!

Brian says

Everything you ever wanted to know about ants...

For instance, how do ants find their way around?

....they wanted to see if ants used the sky to find their way around, so they took pictures of the sky, blew them up into big portraits, put them above ant nests so that they blocked out the real sky, but oriented them slightly differently...and kept track of how the ants got all mixed up.

Ever wonder what an ant nest looks like inside?

....they found one, and poured quick dry cement into it. Then let it dry, washed away all the dirt, and were left with a sculpture in cement of the inside of a nest.

(Everything you ever wanted to know about ants...)

Kelly says

My ex-boyfriend stole this book for me. I would stay up late at night and look at the pictures and try to learn all the funny words. To say the least, his book became my bible. Recently I opened it and noticed the dedication: "To the next generation of myrmecologists." This still makes me cry.

Jenny says

OK so this book is physically huge and is an index of a TON of discovered ants. I'm giving it a five star rating even tho I know I'll never read it cover to cover. Just to have it and be able to refer to it is enuf for me!
