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WHAT GOES ON IN AN ANTHILL



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# SPRING

Hello there! I'm here ... no, over here, on the very top of the anthill! If you think I'm just lounging around sunbathing, you're wrong. I'm absorbing the heat of the sun's rays with my body, so I can help heat the anthill. I think I'm properly warmed up now, so it's time to spread this warmth with the others. Come with me and we can explore the inside of the ant colony.

Hey there!  
Come and take  
a look inside!

We keep the temperature between 25 and 30 degrees centigrade in the anthill, because we don't like the cold. But when it gets too hot for us, especially in summer, we just open the ventilation holes. And when we're cold, we simply close the holes, so that the heat doesn't escape ... like we're doing right now.



# PASSAGE THROUGH THE ANTHILL

Our anthill is a really ingenious structure.

On the surface you see a 2-metre high mound covered with a layer of pine needles, but below the ground it runs much deeper. It has a tangled network of passageways and chambers fortified with twigs. Anyone who doesn't live here will never find their way around it and will soon get lost.

Here we take a right, then a left, then we turn right again, and here we are ... it's the chamber where we keep our food supplies for the winter. The winters can be long and harsh, so we have to make sure that we have what we need to live through it.



# ANTHILL CLEANING

Watch out! There's a big anthill cleanup in progress right now. Over there, the repairer ants are plugging the hole made by a deer's hoof ... once again the cleaners are spreading resin. Remember, when we were at the entrance to the anthill, I told you that resin is important? Well, now it's time to tell you why. It's because resin protects our anthills from mould and bacteria. We spray our ant acid over everything, because it's very effective for cleaning.

## WHAT'S THAT BIRD DOING?

I'll tell you another thing ... some woodland birds enjoy deliberately rolling around in anthills and end up demolishing our homes. It's not that they mean any harm, they just want to get rid of all the parasites in their feathers. A shower of ant acid is perfect for the job.

Help! I don't want to be bird food.



# AN AUDIENCE WITH THE QUEEN

Welcome to our queen's abode, please show her the due respect. She is much larger than us common ants and also lives much longer. While we workers live five years, the queen can live up to twenty. And that's a record in the insect kingdom! Her preeminent role is to lay eggs, and she lays and lays all day long.

How many eggs is that today?

I think it's the seventeenth.



In early spring the queen lays eggs from which will hatch new queens and winged boy ants. Then in summer and autumn she lays eggs that will become our future workers. It's terribly arduous work, she will lay over a hundred million eggs in her lifetime! To make the queen's life easier, we are here to provide for all her needs. We feed her, clean her and tell her what's going on outside.

# NEW HOUSE


What's that going on over there at the edge of the woods? There's a whole lot of building activity going on, that's what. It looks like a new anthill is going up. There are ants dashing around all over the place. Some are scurrying around searching for materials, while others are using them to build a new home. It'll soon be finished, but there will be plenty of backbreaking toil before that. Let's leave the industrious creatures to get on with their task. Goodbye, little ants!



Look, we're going to have new neighbours! Hope you'll come back and visit us again.








Would you like to know what goes on in an anthill? I bet you think it's not possible, nobody could fit into an anthill. Well, imagine that you're able to look inside right now. You'll be guided by a hard-working young ant lady, who will show you how ants live, what they do all day, and what they like to eat. She'll even take you to the royal chambers. You'll also learn many interesting facts on your ant adventure. For example, did you know that ants have guests at home or that aphids are their favourite pets? If you'd like to learn more, come on in and see for yourself.

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