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WELCOME TO THE ANTHILL




ON THE EDGE OF THE FOREST

Oh look, what's that big mound on the edge of the forest?! It's absolutely teeming with life! Let's take a closer look. We need to be very quiet, though, so we don't disturb anyone. Do you know what it is? It's a perfectly constructed anthill full of ants. What do you say? Shall we pay them a visit?



A STABLE FOR APHIDS

The weather outside must be getting worse. The tenders are plucking the aphids from the stems of plants and bringing them into the comfort of the stables inside our anthill. It's true that our aphids are normally kept outside in the pasture, where they feed on plant stems or branches, but during the winter and in poor weather, they are carried carefully inside. Over the winter, we take good care of the aphid eggs. That way, we always have a large flock.



Our aphids are growing nicely!

MILKING APHIDS

Look at all that lovely honeydew! A tender is milking an aphid for its sweet juice. It's easy to do! She just tickles its underbelly with her antennae and the jug fills right up. After that, the tender washes the aphid with a drop of dew to keep it clean. And can you guess why our aphids are so beautifully plump? It's because the tenders move them from plant to plant as they eat to their heart's content. This way, they're never hungry and can make lots of sweet honeydew for us.

ANT GUESTS INVITED AND UNINVITED

UNINVITED GUEST

Oh no, look! That beetle lurking on the edge of our anthill has a sinister plan. It often stands there watching us, waiting to pounce on a lone ant that can't defend itself.

But we won't let it! If it makes one move, we'll swarm all over it and give it a thrashing! Beetles aren't the only ones with fearsome jaws.



GUESTS WE HARDLY NOTICE

We also have harmless guests in our anthill. They roam our corridors feeding on any leftovers they can find. The remains of pupas, egg shells, and leftover food – that sort of thing. As long as they don't try to eat our babies, it's just fine. We have a harmonious relationship with these little bugs.



DOMESTICATED GUESTS

We also have *invited* guests... Come and take a look. They're beetles we've hatched from tiny larvae. We keep them in our chambers and feed and protect them, but they're not allowed to leave our anthill. They can't take a single step outside. Of course, we are fond of these guests, because their secretions liven up our diet...

* BRRR, IT'S GETTING CHILLY ... *

That means winter is approaching.
Soon, we'll have to start preparing.
We'll need to seal all the entrances
and any other holes in our anthill.
Once this is done, we'll descend to
the deepest chambers at the very
bottom of the anthill. There, we'll have
a nice long sleep until springtime.




A NEW HOUSE

What's happening over there at the edge of the woods? There's a whole lot of building activity going on! It looks like a new anthill is going up. Ants are scurrying around all over the place. Some are searching for materials, others are using them to build their new home.

There's a lot of backbreaking work ahead, so let's leave these industrious creatures to get on with their task. So long, little ants!





Have you ever wondered what happens inside an anthill? You have? Well you're in luck. You're about to be guided by a hard-working young ant who's very excited to show you how she and her fellow ants live, what they do all day, and what they like to eat. You'll learn many interesting facts along the way. For example, did you know that ants have guests at home or that aphids are their favorite pets? Come on in and see for yourself. You're sure to have an *ANT*-tastic time!

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