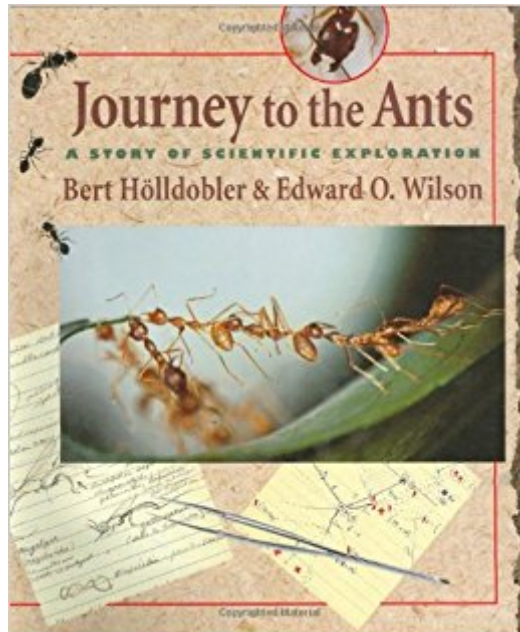




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# Journey To The Ants: A Story Of Scientific Exploration



## Synopsis

View a collection of videos on Professor Wilson entitled "On the Relation of Science and the Humanities" Richly illustrated and delightfully written, *Journey to the Ants* combines autobiography and scientific lore to convey the excitement and pleasure the study of ants can offer. Bert Hölldobler and E. O. Wilson interweave their personal adventures with the social lives of ants, building, from the first minute observations of childhood, a remarkable account of these abundant insects' evolutionary achievement.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Look to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise," says the proverb. Bert Hölldobler and E.O. Wilson have joined together to tell how they took this advice and to share the fruits of their wisdom. As Nature said, they "have done for ants what Levi's did for denim." Not just a good-parts version of their magisterial, Pulitzer-winning *The Ants*, *Journey* is also a double autobiography--the history of how early enthusiasm developed into an enormously fruitful scientific collaboration. "We, having entered our bug period as children, were blessed by never being required to abandon it," the authors write. Their devotion to their chosen field shines through. *Journey to the Ants* gives an outstanding overview of the enormous variety and fascination of myrmecology, from the primitive bulldog ants of Australia to the complexities of weaver ant societies, slave-making ants and agriculture, army ants, and the social parasites concealed within anthills. There is an appendix with practical instructions for collecting individual ants or whole

colonies, dead or alive. HöfÄ¶ldobler and Wilson clearly want other children to follow in their footsteps, growing from simple bug love to insights into evolution and society. --Mary Ellen Curtin  
--This text refers to the Paperback edition.

In 1990, the authors won a Pulitzer Prize (science) for their monumental *The Ants*. Holldobler (Univ. of Wurzburg) and Wilson (Harvard), longtime collaborators, offer lay readers a fascinating glimpse into the world of ants as well as their own personal adventures in the study of these insects. We see weaver ants that live in tropical forest canopies, their nests made of leaves bound with silk. A colony of leafcutter ants raising fungi on pieces of fresh leaves consumes as much vegetation as a cow. Harvester ants alter the abundance and local distribution of flowering plants. The authors describe cooperation and communication; they found that ant species use 10 to 20 chemicals to convey attraction, alarm and other messages. They discuss ants' relations with butterflies, aphids and mealybugs (symbiosis), warfare (over food and territory) and exploitation. We learn that ants do not live at temperatures below 50 F. and that the greatest threat to them is drought. After reading *Journey*, we can only admire these insects and their remarkable social organization. Illustrations. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This is the easy reading version of the authors' grand opus. It was more than enough for me. I am completely satisfied with this book: the writing style(s), the interesting way of comparing ants to humans to give the reader perspective of what ants are like (e.g. "If ants invented atomic weapons they would destroy the planet in a week", to indicate how much more warlike than humans who "comparatively are a benign species" - note: my "quotes" are paraphrases). Ants and I have a special relationship, since I saw a phenomenal occurrence many years ago (see attached account). I was hoping that these two eminent myrmecologists might have witnessed something similar enough to tell me what was going on. Alack and alas! I remain as ignorant as before. Nevertheless, I was captivated by this reading experience and love referring to it whenever the subject of ants comes up, which, given that I enjoy them so much, is rather oftener than one might expect.

After reading this book, you will never view evolution and man's place on this planet in the same light. The ants are incredible.

Excellent as a resource and general reading. Again, Holdobler and Wilson are supreme.

Awesome book. First chapters more about the history of myrmecology which personally I want that into the topic but the remainder of the book has read like a good novel.

This book is easy to read. Could easily be used by elementary, middle school, and secondary school teachers to prepare a number of interesting lessons and scientific projects. Not only can insects (ants in particular, of course) but society, community, non-linguistic communication, evolution, and putting the universe into a size perspective provides many areas for class discussion. "Ants are oblivious to human existence." An incredible statement that will spark great conversation. Ants do not even know we are here! And they won't miss us when we are gone. After we have destroyed our natural habitat, they will continue to live in their microwildernesses. Text also provides a brief chapter on how to collect and observe ants and ant colonies. I am a language teacher but found reading this text simple and interesting.

great book!

I am a resident of the Southern California desert near Twentynine Palms. I was looking for a book to help me identify the several different ants on my property. This isn't the book for that but it is much more. Feel lucky I chose this title, the two authors won a Pulitzer for their earlier work, "The Ants". This is a very readable condensation of that earlier book. Will get another book to help me identify the ants on my property, in the mean time I'm reading this book cover to cover like a good novel and learning surprising things about these amazing insects, the ants.

I have to admit I did not expect to find this book as interesting as it turned out to be. I was only interested in identifying some species within my yard and discovered quite a bit about ants. This book won't make you an expert, but it has made me see ants from a whole new perspective, so much so that I have come to like them instead of disliking them. I can also see why it is possible to kill a colony so easily. Never knew that once the queen is gone, there is no colony. I think if ants had atom bombs they would have destroyed the earth by now - killing each other. I had no idea they were so aggressive towards one another. Anyway, great book to read.

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