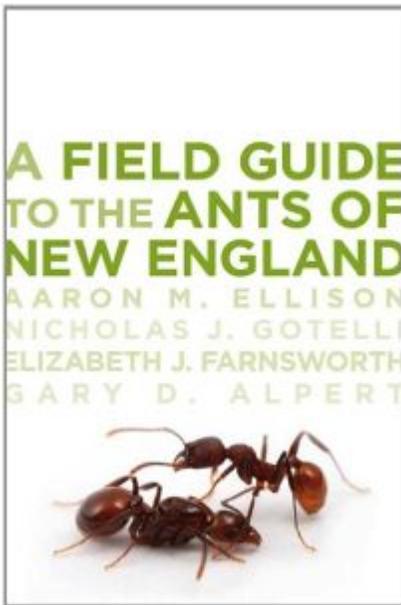


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A Field Guide to the Ants of New England

Aaron M. Ellison, Nicholas J. Gotelli, Elizabeth J. Farnsworth, and Gary D. Alpert. Yale Univ., \$29.95 trade paper (416p) ISBN 978-0-300-16930-0

Amateur naturalists seeking a guide for meaningful fieldwork, along with readers curious about the natural world, will welcome this comprehensive and lucid consideration of the over 130 ant species living in or around New England. The authors, biologists and ecologists, successfully convey their sense of wonder at and appreciation for an animal whose complex and fascinating lives are unknown to most, despite their ubiquity. There are loads of intriguing tidbits. For example, some predators, such as spiders, have evolved to mimic ants' physiognomies so perfectly that trained experts can't always tell them apart. Meanwhile, some ant species enslave others to do their menial work. Ant colonies function as highly social super-organisms: "[t]he single ant you see running across the forest floor or your kitchen counter is in reality a short-lived, specialized extension of the colony itself." There are also simple, step-by-step instructions for observing and collecting ants, along with detailed illustrations and diagrams to assist in classification. Color & b&w illus. (Nov.)

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