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## Posts tagged '#ants'

### Lowely, Lovely, Ants

It is the first day of Spring 2013. A snow storm has just dropped 10 inches or more of fresh snow on the landscape and an additional few inches are predicted for tomorrow. I am working late tonight and I decided to download a pod cast of one of my favorite radio programs. When I heard Magna Chakrabarti of Radio Boston on NPR say...“A ramble through Nature” I had to listen.

Magna was interviewing Aaron Ellison, a research fellow at Harvard and co-author of “A Field Guide to the Ants of New England”. As they walked together around Walden Pond, Mr. Ellison shared the following facts;

It turns out that the soil that we have in New England was made by ants; and not by earthworms, as many might think, because the glaciers wiped out the earthworms. The earthworms we have today in New England have been imported, in various ways. The soil that has been created over the last ten thousand to fifteen thousand years, at a rate of 1” for every two hundred years, is due to ants.

Ants are like tiny excavators. Their nests go down 3 to 5 feet and the material excavated by these tiny little creatures is brought to the surface, creating soil.



There are a 120 species of ants in New England, the largest being the Eastern Carpenter ant. All worker ants are female and there are between ten thousand to fifty thousand worker ants to a colony.

Ants eat everything! If it weren't for ants we would be in big trouble. Ants are one of the most important recycler's we have on this planet. They make soil, recycle debris, make nutrients for the soil and clean our planet at the same time.

At the end of the walk Magna asked Mr. Ellison what he hoped to accomplish with his book on ants.

He replied that he hoped people would learn to appreciate another creature that shares [and which gives so generously] to our planet. After all, he concludes, "Ants could get along fine without humans, but humans cannot get along without ants".

To hear the whole broadcast go to this link: <http://radioboston.wbur.org/2013/03/20/ants>

For more information on ants you can also go to this link:  
<http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/bugs/ant/>



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