

by galleries with each other and with the surface of the soil. Walter et al., counted 911 chambers in a single large nest. Within many of the chambers the ants grow a specific fungus on a substratum composed largely, if not entirely, of macerated leaves. The adult ants not only feed on the fungus but they also feed it to their brood, which develop within the chambers. The minor workers cultivate the fungus and care for the brood, the medium-size workers cut and transport the leaves to the nest, and the very large workers guard the nest. The surface of the soil above the nest bears numerous holes, each surrounded by crescent- or crater-shaped piles of earth. These piles vary greatly in size and are usually most numerous above the central exterior part of the nest, becoming more widely and irregularly spaced laterally. The galleries leading from the craters to the interior of the nest ventilate and regulate the interior temperature and moisture, and allow for the passage of leaves brought in by the workers and for the exit of ants at the time of the nuptial flight. A very large nest may occupy an exterior surface of 4,500 square feet and have 1,000 or more entrance holes. Some nests are very old, the colony having occupied the same general nesting site for more than 60 or 70 years.

Workers frequently forage from 300 to 600 feet from the nest and make conspicuous foraging paths. During the summer they forage mostly at night, but in the fall, winter, or spring when the air temperature ranges between 45° and 90° F., foraging takes place during the day unless it is too cold or wet. The ants cut leaves from almost any type of plant, but Wheeler stated that they attack only one type of plant at a time; he thought they preferred small or narrow leaves regardless of texture. Also transported by the ants are the floral parts of plants, caterpillar droppings, Spanish moss, seeds of juniper, hackberry, and yaupon, corn, cornmeal, flour, rice, peas, wheat, oats, chops, bread, cake, chickenfeed, sugar, beans, ground coffee, and even chewing tobacco.

The nuptial flights take place from early April into June. Walter et al stated that the flights occur on clear, moonless nights and that immense numbers take part in the flights. J. C. Moser (unpublished data) also found that the nuptial flights took place just before dawn on dark, still, moonless nights. He also noted that a single colony was capable of giving off successive flights over a period of weeks before exhausting itself of sexual forms. At one time it was thought that a single colony contained only one reproductive female or queen, but Moser has recently found as many as five wingless, presumably fertile females in a single colony. No one has made a detailed count of the number of individuals in a colony, but in a very large one it must run into as many as several hundred thousands.

The ants may affect man by invading his house and stealing farinaceous or other foods, by cutting leaves from his domesticated plants, by stealing seeds, by building unsightly nests on his premises, and by damaging roads, walks, stock, or equipment by cave-ins of the nests. When a nest is broken into and the ants are greatly disturbed, the large workers can inflict painful bites which often produce blood. McCook stated that the bites of workers are not as painful as are the stings of the harvesting ant *Pogonomyrma barbatus* (F. Smith). Frequently, the