

**ANTS AND THE CHILDREN OF THE
GARDEN, RELATING THE HABITS OF THE
BLACK HARVESTER ANT, AND GIVING
CONSIDERABLE INFORMATION ABOUT
ANTS IN GENERAL**

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Ants and the children of the garden, relating the habits of the black harvester ant, and giving considerable information about ants in general by J. Dean Simkins

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UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

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OF THE GARDEN

RELATING THE HABITS OF THE BLACK HARVESTER ANT
AND
GIVING CONSIDERABLE INFORMATION
ABOUT ANTS IN GENERAL

BY

J. DEAN SIMKINS

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TO THE
UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA

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PREFACE.

A colony of Black Harvester Ants had a nest on the boundary between a bean patch and a back yard. The garden was cultivated by three boys and two girls. They became much interested in the ants and asked many questions about them.

The common prejudice against this insect soon disappears when it is understood that only a few kinds are troublesome and that ants are useful to man.

Children nine years of age and over are easily interested in this subject and desire much more information than is to be found in juvenile literature. They have abundant time and opportunity for observation—a great deal more than adults have. They are naturalists because their ancestors have been all down through the ages. Observe, investigate, question, question, question, experiment is the rule of life. The aim of this book is to aid in keeping alive these native instincts, and the little denizen of the earth, that we are to study, is a fit teacher to introduce the child of man to the world of nature.

If school classes could read something of the wonderful actions of ants and speculate on the motives that prompted the same, the back yard might become as interesting as the circus.

In the following pages, an attempt has been made to record the day-after-day life of a colony of Black Harvester Ants for a period of one year—July 1st to July 1st. Monosyllables have been largely employed for evident reasons.

The observations made are truly recorded, but the reader is welcome to his own inferences as to motives. If ants reason, it is not as we do. Ants can learn somewhat by experience—can be trained.

A number of facts are given about several common ants and considerable information about ants in general.

"The Ant" is chosen as the subject because it is found in

all outdoors, is commonly observed by children, is the most intelligent insect, and has been an interesting object of study, speculation or observation by many people, from rustic to savant, since the beginning of recorded literature. How many hundred years since Aesop wrote the story of "The Ant and Grasshopper"? What child in any land has not heard or read the story?

J. DEAN SIMKINS.

East San Diego, California,
July 1, 1922.

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W. H. Wheeler, author of "Ants," and Dean of Economic Entomology, Harvard University.

Henry McCook, author of several books on the subject.

C. W. Woodworth, Entomologist, State University of California. The illustrations of the Black Harvester Ant are largely modifications of a drawing by Dr. Woodworth.

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