

A Spectacular Discovery

In 2005, forest workers in Northumberland, England, made a spectacular discovery. Wood ants in a forest there had built an **anthill** out of spruce and pine tree needles that was five and a half feet (1.7 m) tall.

“I couldn’t believe its sheer **scale**,” said forest worker Steve Morris. Most of the anthills he had seen were no more than two feet (.6 m) tall.

This giant anthill, however, was only the entrance to the wood ants’ huge home. Tunnels starting in the anthill led to a hidden underground nest that was home to a **colony** of about 500,000 wood ants!



A large anthill built by wood ants



Wood ants

Wood ants spend time in their aboveground anthill only in the summer. During the cold winter, the ants live in their underground nest, where it is warmer.