

Make Your Own Collection for the School of Ants

MATERIALS:

- 8 white 3x5" index cards (or similar sized paper)
- 1 pen or pencil
- 2 Pecan Sandies cookies*
- 8 small zip-lock bags (1-quart)
- 1 big zip-lock bag (1-gallon)
- 1 envelope for submitting your kit by US mail, plus postage

*Allergy warning: contains nuts!

COLLECTION DATA	
Collector Name	Address where ants were collected
Weather (e.g. sunny, cloudy, rainy)	Temperature (°F)
Collection Date	Time of collection
Habitat type: GREEN (e.g. lawn, forest, garden)	Detailed habitat: GREEN (e.g. base of tree, in grassy yard)
Habitat type: PAVED (e.g. sidewalk, driveway, playground)	Detailed habitat: PAVED (e.g. gravel driveway, street corner)
CONFIRMATION CODE: (Issued after you enter collection data online)	

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Thanks for joining our investigation of the ants that live around us! The School of Ants is mapping ant species in cities and towns, starting in your backyard or school. Your samples help us to understand local biodiversity, document native and introduced species, and will help us track the effects of climate change and urbanization. To get started, follow these **5 easy steps** to collect and submit a sample. *After we receive and identify your ants, we will alert you by email that your ants are mapped!*

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Step 1: GREEN SPACE. Take 4 notecards and 1 cookie to a green outdoor space (lawn, garden or forest), preferably on a warm sunny day. Write the word GREEN on the cards and place them on the ground about 1 foot apart. Place a rock on the cards if it is windy! Break the cookie into 4 pieces and each on top of a card. Be sure the edges of the cards touch the ground so ants can easily discover your delicious crumbs. *Record your collection information on this sheet.*

Step 2: PAVED SPACE. Repeat step 1, but choose a nearby site that has paved surfaces (e.g. sidewalk, driveway, playground) and write PAVED on each card. Record your collection information on this sheet.

Step 3: COLLECT. One hour after you set out your cookies, it is time to collect the ants! Pick up each card and quickly pour the crumbs, ants, and card into its own zip-lock bag (Note: some ants can sting, so be careful. Use extra caution if you are allergic to bee or wasp stings.) Seal each bag right away! The card should show where your ants were collected (Green vs. Paved). To preserve your samples for research and prevent them from decomposing, place all 8 bags into a large zip-lock bag and freeze them overnight. This is a humane way to sacrifice ants. **Suggestion: leave a bit of air in each bag to cushion the ants so they won't get crushed in the mail!*

Step 4: REGISTER. Register your kit on our website www.schoolofants.org. You will need to make a username and password. Follow the prompts to enter your data and you will receive your Confirmation Code. Write this code in the data table on this sheet.

Step 5: SUBMIT. Submit your sample after completing this checklist.

Your package should include:

- 8 small bags each with a card labeled GREEN or PAVED, hopefully full of ants, frozen overnight
- This sheet, with the CONFIRMATION CODE you received after entering your collection data online, printed clearly above.
- Send your kit in to:

The School of Ants c/o Dr. Lucky
University of Florida
Dept. of Entomology & Nematology
970 Natural Area Dr.
Gainesville, FL 32611-0620 USA

NOTE that you are responsible for postage!

From the whole School of Ants Team, thanks for participating