

ZOMBIE ANTS & THE MIND CONTROLLING BRAIN PARASITE FUNGUS

DEEP IN THE JUNGLE THERE IS A HIDDEN HORROR, A FOUL FUNGUS THAT WOULDN'T SEEM OUT OF PLACE IN A SCIENCE FICTION MOVIE. HOWEVER, THIS ISN'T 'NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD', THESE ANTS ARE VERY MUCH ALIVE AND VERY MUCH REAL. LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT HOW THIS FUNGUS CONTROLS THE MINDS OF ANTS AND THEN EXPLORE IF SOMETHING SIMILAR COULD EVER HAPPEN TO HUMANS...

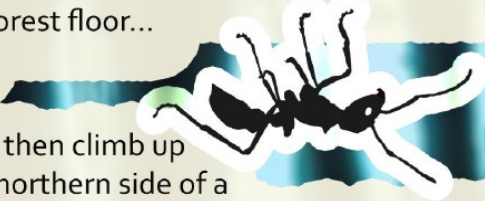
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A single fungal spore attaches to the ant and begins to grow **hypha** - the long, finger like strands that make up the normally underground part of a fungus. The hypha drills into the exoskeleton of the ant using a mixture of enzymes and mechanical pressure.

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The ant experiences severe, full body muscular spasms that cause it to fall from the trees onto the forest floor...



...it will then climb up onto the northern side of a sapling, about 25cm above the soil, where all the conditions are perfect for fungal growth

The fungus can now grow inside the ant and invade its **hemocoel** - the main space in between the organs of the ant where all of the blood is found.

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THE ANT THEN RAVENOUSLY BITES, AS DEEP AS POSSIBLE, INTO THE UNSUSPECTING SAPLING

Once the ant has bitten, the fungus quickly destroys the connection between the brain and muscle, leaving the ant unable to control its own mouth, stuck to the leaf.

This is known as the **DEATH GRIP** as it is the final action an ant will ever take on this earth...

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As the ant is starving to death the fungus begins to take control of more and more of the body's resources. Once the ant has finally died the fungus shoots out of its head and body as mushroom-like fruiting bodies, ready to rain fungal spores upon the ant's colony below, thus starting the whole deadly process again.

