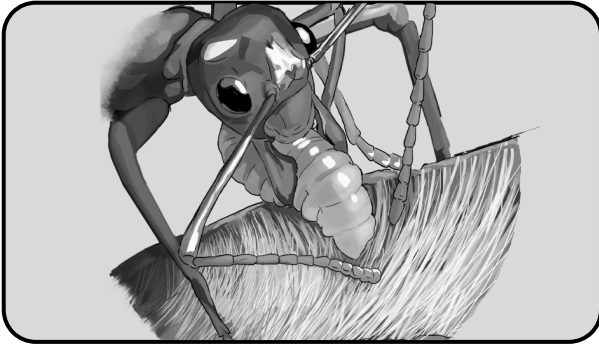
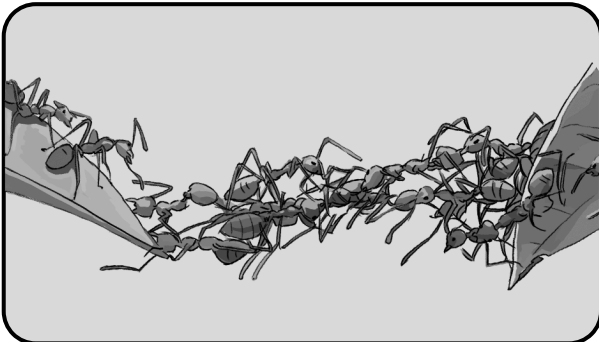


# WEAVER ANTS

## OECOPHYLLA



The special feature of weaver ants (*Oecophylla*) is their unique nest-building behavior: They weave their nests from living leaves by pulling them together on long chains with their powerful jaws. They then use their own brood - or more precisely their larvae - and their spider silk to firmly glue the leaves together with thin threads. This remarkable technique enables the ants to build stable and weatherproof nests high up in trees, providing protection from predators and flooding. In addition, the living nest provides an optimal climate for the development of their brood.



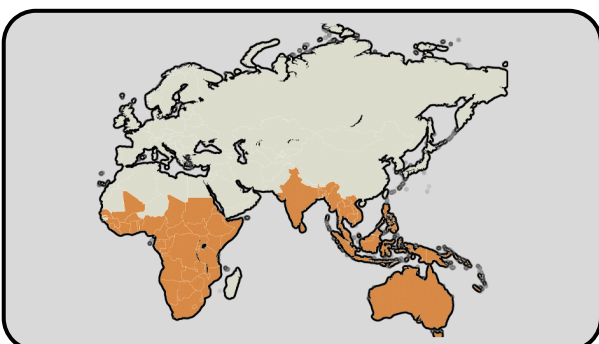
In weaver ants (*Oecophylla*), workers can form long living chains to pull the leaves together when building their nests. They hold on to each other with their strong mouthparts (mandibles) and legs. Such chains sometimes consist of several dozen ants and sometimes reach lengths of over 20 centimetres. Together they develop considerable tensile forces, enabling them to bend leaves that are hundreds of times their own body weight. Their bodies act like clamps and ropes at the same time.



Colonies of weaver ants (*Oecophylla*) can become exceptionally large, often comprising several hundred thousand workers per colony. In some cases, particularly large colonies can even reach up to half a million individuals. A colony can consist of numerous, interconnected sub-nests that extend over several trees or larger shrubs.



Protected chambers for the queen, brood and supplies are created within the leaves. The nested leaf structure ensures a constant temperature and humidity. The workers actively regulate the microclimate by opening and closing small entrances and gaps in the leaves. The nests usually have several levels, which are branched vertically and horizontally. There are small passages between the individual levels through which the ants can move around the entire nest. The nests are flexible enough to withstand wind, rain and vibrations, yet stable enough to accommodate large colonies.

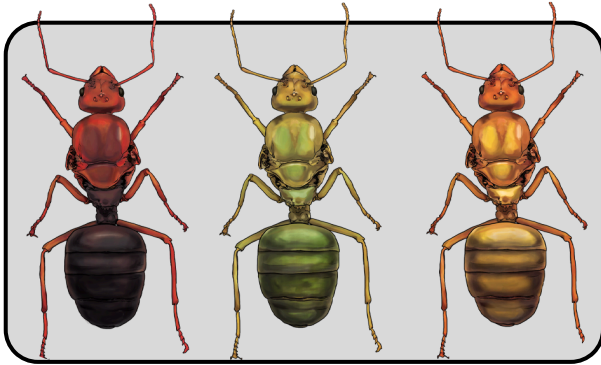


### Distribution area

- Tropical regions of Africa, Asia, Australia and Oceania
- Particularly common in Southeast Asia (e.g. Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia)
- Northern Australia and Pacific islands
- Prefer to colonize tropical forests, rainforests, tree plantations and parks
- Prefer trees with large leaves that are ideal for nesting

# WEAVER ANTS

## OECOPHYLLA



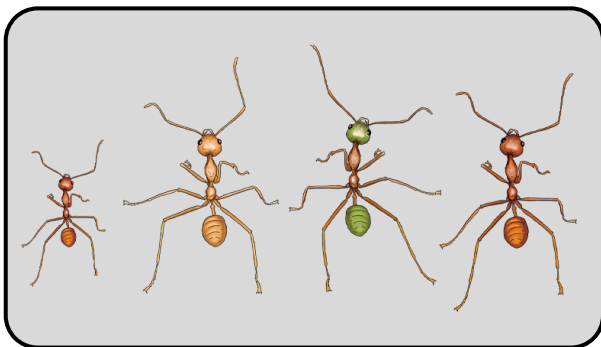
### Queens:

- Size: approx. 15-20 mm
- Color: mostly greenish or brown-orange, abdomen lighter colored



### Males:

- Size: approx. 10-12 mm
- Color: mostly black to brown, slender body with wings



### Workers:

- Size: approx. 5-10 mm (variable)
- Color: reddish-brown, orange or greenish (depending on species), often semi-transparent