

The War is On: Let's Explode and Kill Our Enemies!

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Different animals inhabit the Southeast Asian rainforests and all of them have different mechanisms of self-protection. One such ant species is *Colobopsis explodens*, also known as “exploding ants.” These ants use a very different mechanism to escape from predators. As suggested by its name, when attacked, the minor worker ants break their body wall and release a sticky liquid from a yellow gland. This liquid kills or injures the predator, but kills the attacking ants as well. On the other hand, the major worker ants have big, plug-shaped heads used to physically barricade the nest entrances against intruders. Therefore, they are popularly known as “doorkeepers.” This extraordinary form of self-sacrifice, also known as autothysis, was discovered by research teams from Austria, Thailand, and Brunei in 2014. In fact, several species of the same genus of ants carry out self-sacrifice to protect themselves from predatory insects. Researchers are exploring more into the behavior of this species of ants.

Cite this article

Enago Academy, The War is On: Let's Explode and Kill Our Enemies!. Enago Academy. 2018/07/10. <https://www.enago.com/academy/the-war-is-on-lets-explode-and-kill-our-enemies/>