



Natural History Field Seminars, Workshops, and Courses at Eagle Hill on the Eastern Maine Coast

Ants (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) of the Northeast

July 14 - 20, 2011

This seminar will provide a broad overview of the taxonomy, ecology and distribution of the ants (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) of northeastern North America, with a focus on New England species. All of the New England ant genera, and many New England species occur throughout much of North America, so the skills and methods introduced in this seminar will be applicable across the continent. Field studies will focus on the ant fauna of different natural community types in eastern Maine, and collections will expand the faunal records from the region. Lectures will include how to identify ants, methodological and statistical comparisons of different collecting techniques, and how to use ants as ecological indicators of ecological integrity and of successful habitat management and restoration. Evening lab work will focus on identification of specimens collected in the field, brought to the seminar from participants' home locations, or collected the week before in interior Maine. Participants will learn about different collection methods, how to photograph ants in the field and through a microscope, appropriate sample curation and specimen handling, and how they can contribute to global-scale collaborative studies on ant ecology and biogeography. This seminar welcomes participants from a wide range of backgrounds, including professional entomologists, natural resource and park managers, and excited amateur ant collectors.

There are plans for an optional pre-seminar field trip to Baxter State Park and nearby interior Maine collect ants. Details are pending.

Dr. Aaron Ellison (aellison@fas.harvard.edu) received his Ph.D. in evolutionary ecology from Brown University in 1986. Following post-doctoral research at Cornell and in Costa Rica, he taught at Swarthmore College (1989-1990) and Mount Holyoke College (1990-2002), where he was the Marjorie Fisher Professor of Environmental Studies. In 2002, Aaron joined Harvard University's Harvard Forest as a Senior Research Fellow in Ecology. At Harvard, Aaron studies the response of ants and plants to global climate change, the community ecology of ants and plants in wetlands and forests, evolutionary ecology of carnivorous plants, food web dynamics, and the application of Bayesian statistical inference to ecological research and environmental decision-making. He is an avid nature photographer; his photographs have appeared on many journal covers and in *Wings: Essays on Invertebrate Conservation* (The Xerces Society). He has authored or co-authored over 100 scientific papers, dozens of book reviews and software reviews, and the books *A Field Guide to the Ants of New England* (Yale University Press) and *A Primer of Ecological Statistics* (Sinauer Associates). He is also the Editor-in-Chief of *Ecological Monographs*, a flagship journal of the Ecological Society of America. For the last 10 years, Aaron has assiduously collected ants from bogs and poor fens throughout New England and explored the intricate relationships between ants, carnivorous pitcher plants, and noctuid moths.