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Moving between day and night

Navigational and sensory adaptations in ants

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Gould Seminar Room (Room 235) Gould building, 116 Daley Road, ANU



The requirement to find their way to significant locations (e.g., mating sites, overwintering locations, abundant food resources, home) is a common and a fundamental challenge for most animals on earth. In this talk, I will discuss the navigational repertoire of ants, with emphasis on the information content of the environment, and the visual adaptations required for sensing at different light intensities. Along the way, I will introduce some cool techniques of tracking insect movements in their natural environment.

Ajay Narendra began his career as an ant taxonomist studying ant distribution in the rainforests of Western Ghats, India. He was

awarded a PhD from Macquarie University, Sydney for his work on navigation strategies in desert ants of North African Sahara and Central Australia. Since then he has held 3 postdoctoral positions, all at The ANU: 2 years as Centre of Excellence in Vision Science Fellow; 3 years as an ARC funded Australian Postdoctoral Fellow (APD) and since 2012 as an ARC funded Discovery Early Career Researcher. As part of outreach, he regularly leads 'ant walks' for general public and for school kids and is the lead author of the world's first field guide on ants, *On A Trail With Ants: Handbook of the Ants of Peninsular India*.

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