**Fire Ant Behavior**

To search for food, foraging worker ants leave the nest or mound and water randomly. Upon discovery of a food source, they head straight back to the colony, using their stingers to periodically mark the ground and leave a chemical pheromone trail. When they reach their colony, additional worker ants follow the trail to the newly found food source. Those ants retrieve the food and return to the colony, also marking the trail laid down by the first group. Subsequently, many more ants follow the foraging trail, quickly arriving at the food source and dominating the site to protect it from competitors. Fire ants have mandibles for biting, as well as a venom-injecting sting, which injects an alkaloid venom. They use their mandibles to bite and latch on to their prey and then sting and inject their venom using the stinger on their abdomen. Fire ants sleep in “shifts”, so while one group of ants is working, another is sleeping and vice-versa.