

PROBLEM

It has been estimated that there are about 1,500 species of Australian plants that are regularly dispersed by ants. The ants are attracted to the seed because it has a firm fleshy appendage (called an elaiosome) and carry the seeds back to their nests. Only a little is known about the local W.A. plants and one of the experts on the subject lives in Norway and only worked in W.A. for less than a year!

INFORMATION

DESIGN OF EXPERIMENT

1. What other notes should you make about the habitat, the environmental conditions and the ants activity on days you do your experiments?
2. How will you score your results if ants of several species appear on the scene unexpectedly and a brawl ensues?
3. Are you going to study foraging only during the day or at night as well?

REFERENCES

Berg, R.Y. (1975). Myrmecochorous plants in Australia and their dispersal by ants. *Australian Journal of Botany* 23, 475-508. (Good stuff if you can survive the terminology that hits you in the first few pages).