



# Fingerpaint Madagascar Ants

Celebrate island ecosystems by creating your very own masterpiece at home! Fingerpaint ants inspired by species from Madagascar, an island nation off the east coast of Africa. Observe and then incorporate unique details to demonstrate the biodiversity of Madagascar and other islands around the world.

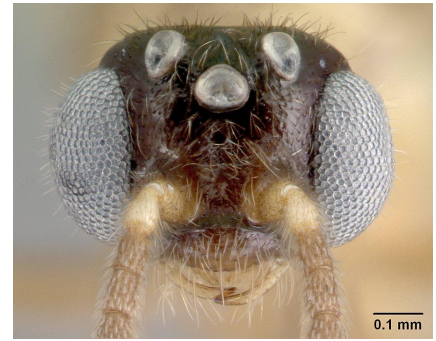
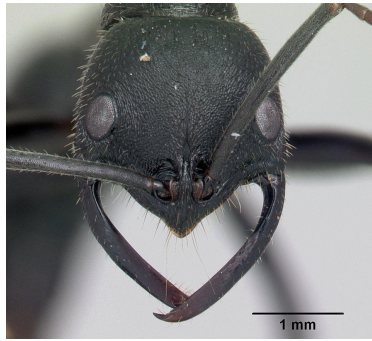
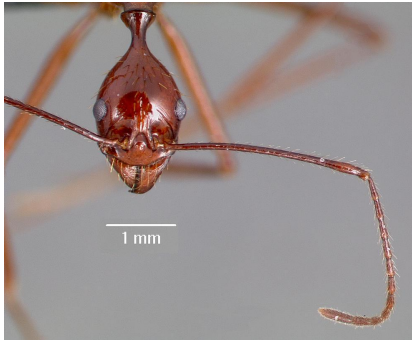
## Materials

White paper  
Colored pencils or crayons  
Washable, non-toxic paint

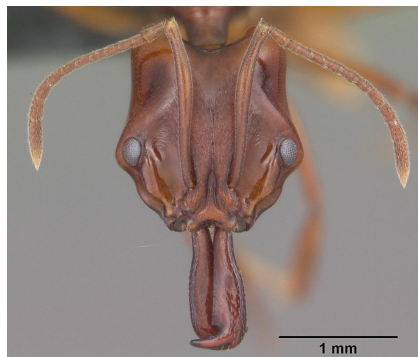
## Directions

1. **Paint** a background for your ants with your fingers. Will they be on a branch? The forest floor?
2. **Paint** an ant friend (or two!) with your fingers. Like all insects, ants have three body segments and six legs. Get creative with your color choices!
3. **Wait** for your painting to dry and **look** at the following images of ants from Madagascar. You can find more at [antweb.org](http://antweb.org) (hosted by the California Academy of Sciences). What do you notice that makes each ant look similar? What do you notice that makes each ant unique?





Species from left to right: *Aphaenogaster bressleri*, *Leptogenys alluaudi*, *Adetomyrma aureocuprea*



Species from left to right: *Camponotus androy*, *Anochetus madagascarensis*, *Strumigenys micrans*

4. **Use** colored pencils or crayons to add details to your ant(s) once your painting has dried. Will yours have hairs? Vary in color? Show off menacing mandibles? Feature bent antennas or iridescent wings?
5. **Show** off your masterpiece! Then, **look** for ants outside or on the second floor of Osher Rainforest next time you're at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco.

