

## Best Paper of 2016: International Union for the Study of Social Insects

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Andrew Burchill and Corrie Moreau have received the prize for best paper published in *Insectes Sociaux* in 2016 for their paper “Colony size evolution in ants: macroevolutionary trends”. The Union instituted an annual Award for the Best Paper published in *Insectes Sociaux* in 2011. This award carries with it an honorarium of \$1000.

Burchill and Moreau assembled the available data on colony size for ants and overlaid this information on the current consensus evolutionary tree for ants. Doing this allowed them to develop an understanding of dynamics of how colony size evolved and to propose hypotheses that will lead to very interesting subsequent studies. Evolutionary trends show gradual transitions to larger colony sizes. This may support a view that there were few unique innovations that allowed sudden jumps in colony size. They found no strong evidence for reversal of colony size evolution when considering large to medium shifts, at least if the evolution of obligate social parasites is set aside.

Andrew Burchill was an undergraduate student at the University of Chicago when he worked on this project and he is now a graduate student in the Center for Social Dynamics and Complexity at Arizona State University. Corrie Moreau is an Associate Curator at the Field

Museum of Natural History and the Evolutionary Biology program at the University of Chicago. Her interests are in biodiversity, speciation, and the use of molecular techniques to develop deep phylogenies.

The editorial board of *Insectes Sociaux* selected the recipient of this award. The board consists of prominent scientists from leading universities with global representation. *Insectes Sociaux* publishes original scientific studies and review articles about social arthropods.

Burchill AT, Moreau CS (2016) Colony size evolution in ants: macroevolutionary trends. *Insect. Soc.* 63:291. doi:[10.1007/s00040-016-0465-3](https://doi.org/10.1007/s00040-016-0465-3).

This paper appeared in the May 2016 issue of the journal and was highlighted in an editorial in the journal:

Colony size evolution in ants 2016, *Insect. Soc.* 63:205–206 doi:[10.1007/s00040-016-0485-z](https://doi.org/10.1007/s00040-016-0485-z) which is also available at: <https://insectessociaux.com/2016/04/09/colony-size-evolution-in-ants/>.