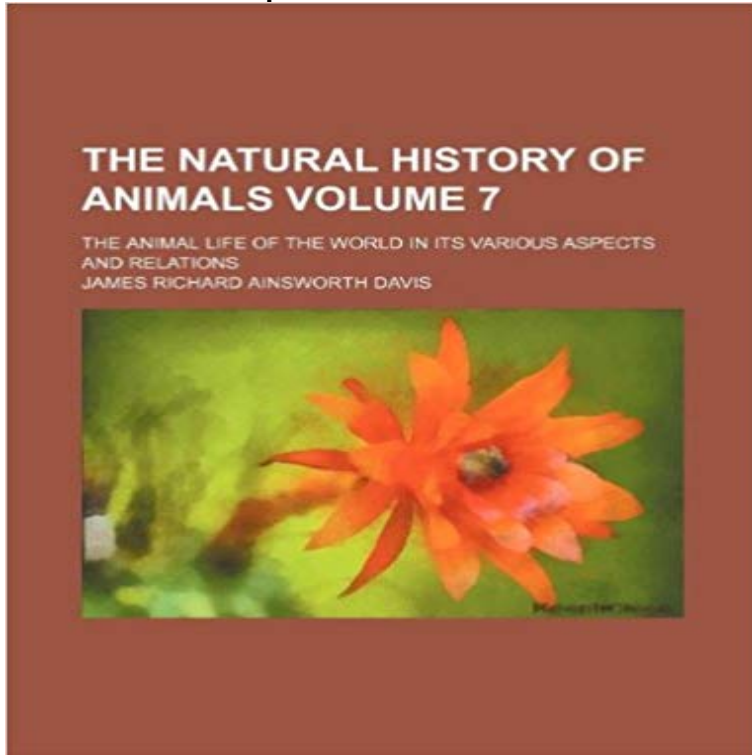


The natural history of animals Volume 7 ; the animal life of the world in its various aspects and relations



This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1904 Excerpt: ...of the nest is trodden down into a number of ant-roads , which are the scene of much busy going and coming. The larger workers are principally concerned, when outside the nest, with collecting building materials, while an important duty of the smaller workers is to collect the honeydew of aphides, insects which are often picturesquely described as ant-cows . The substance in question is a sugary fluid that exudes in considerable amount from the intestines of these little creatures, and is eagerly swallowed by the workers, a great deal of it passing into their dilated crops. Having filled themselves up with this desirable food, the workers hurry back to the nest, and obligingly distribute some of their store for the benefit of the larvae, and their adult friends who have meanwhile been engaged with the internal economy of the nest. There are no special receptacles corresponding to the honey-tubs of humble-bees or comb-cells of ordinary bees, for storage of what is not immediately needed. Indeed none of our native ants indulge in the luxury of a larder, and remain in a torpid condition during the winter. The food is by no means limited to honey-dew, but is of very mixed nature, for caterpillars, various adult insects, and miscellaneous vegetable matter all figure in the bill of fare. There is a constant return of foraging parties to the central home (fig. 1097). The ant-hill is literally riddled with labyrinthine galleries expanding at intervals into rounded chambers, and for some depth the underlying ground is mined with passages continuous with those above. It is easier to destroy an ant-hill than to get any clear idea of its internal economy, but J. G. Wood (in *Insects at Home*) thus describes a

very ingenious device by w...

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