Ant that explodes to kill its enemy

*C. explodens* releases deadly chemical

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A newly discovered species of ant may look harmless on the outside, but inside these insects are ticking time bombs. When attacked, *Colobopsis explodens* ants live up to their name – they explode! The blast releases poisonous yellow goo that stops their enemies in their tracks.

*C. explodens* are found in the tropical jungles of Borneo. They live in colonies of thousands, high up in the treetops, said Alice Laciny, an entomologist. She and other scientists recently identified 15 species of exploding ants, including the previously unknown *C. explodens*.

Ant colonies can contain several queens that lay eggs, along with workers who care for the queens and their young. Colonies also have soldiers with large, plug-shaped heads and strong legs. Such features allow them to “act like living doors, barricading the nest entrances from the inside,” said Ms. Laciny.

It latches onto an enemy and squeezes its own abdominal muscles hard enough that its backside bursts open, releasing the goo. It sacrifices itself to kill its rival. You need to be very careful. Just a touch with the finger can make them explode,” she said.