

Collective Nouns

Collective nouns are a group of people, animals or things acting as a single unit.

"A pack of thieves stuck in a cloud of dust was attacked by an army of ants."

Collective nouns are singular in American English. Since the noun is singular, the verbs and pronouns are almost always singular.

"A pack of wolves is running after a sheep."
The verb "is" equals one; "are" equals more than one.

"A school of fish is a group of fish swimming in the same direction in a coordinated manner."

"V-shaped formations allows a flock of birds to use less energy (wind resistance)."

"A swarm of bees is most likely to be seen in late spring or early summer."

"The world record for largest litter of kittens is 19."

"Even a zebra should avoid a pack of dogs."

"A pride of lions can easily eat a buffalo."

"In Africa, a herd of buffalo can have more than 1,000 members."

Collective Nouns

"Ferdinand Magellan and his crew of sailors departed in 1519 to find another sea route to Asia."

"A fleet of ships does not have an exact number, but they have a common goal."

"A class of children is excited to learn collective nouns."

"Everyone used a deck of cards to learn math."

"A panel of experts sat around a table."

"We received a basket of fruit as a gift."

"Would you prefer a bunch of grapes or a bunch of bananas?"

"How many oyster should I gather take to make a string of pearls?"

"The bouquet of flowers was for my wife."

A bouquet of flowers is redundant.

All bouquets are flowers! (Notice it is more than one bouquet.)

A bouquet of roses is more descriptive.

Strangely, the collective noun police gets a plural verb.

"In Thailand, police are required to wear a Hello Kitty armband if they break the law. The people are happy with this ruling."

If you are ever in doubt on what verb to use, introduce the collective noun with the word *members*. Then use a plural verb. The *members* of _____ are acting as individuals.

Collective Noun

a pack of thieves



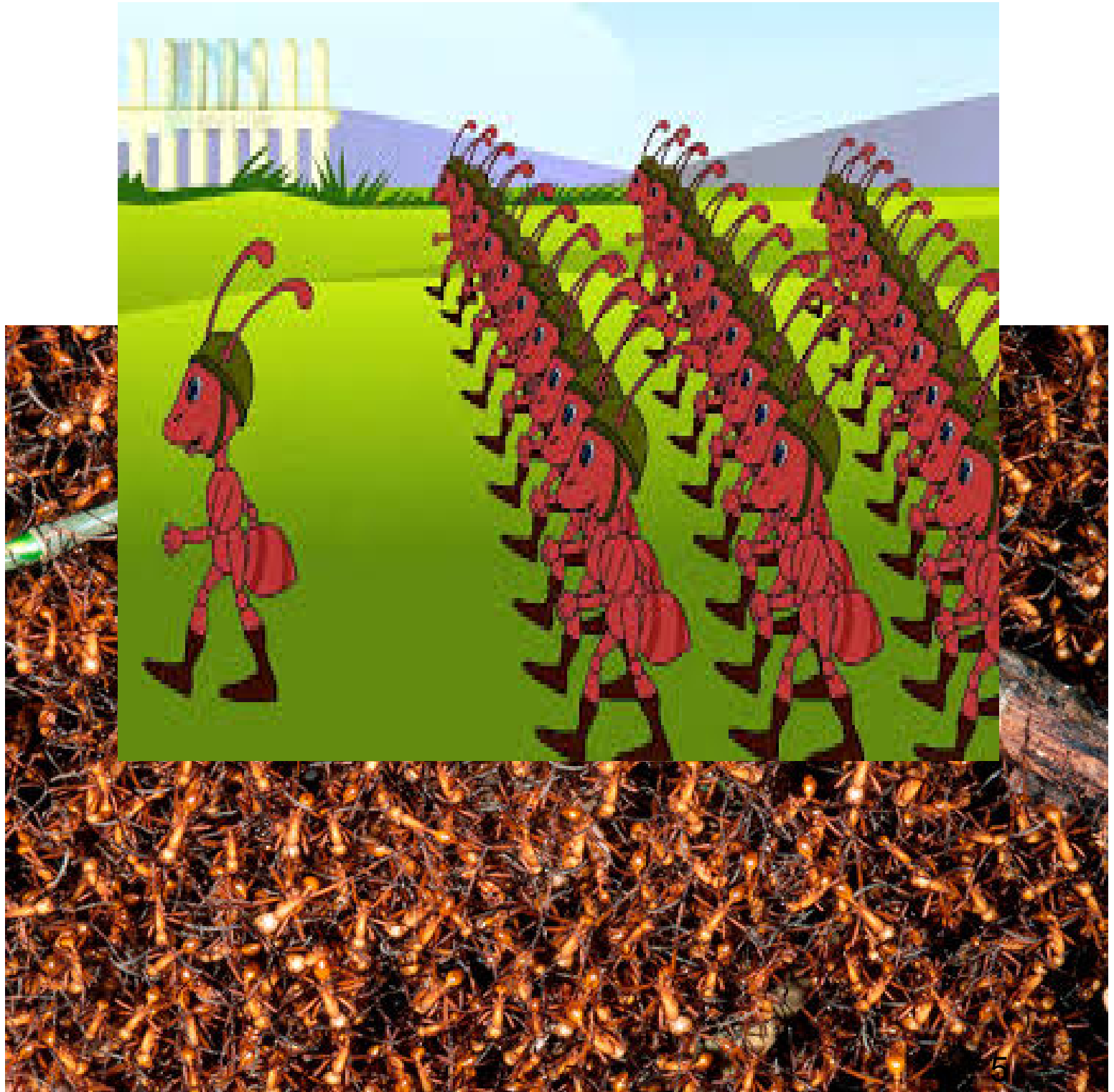
Collective Noun

a cloud of dust



Collective Noun

an army of ants



Collective Noun

a pack of wolves



Collective Noun

a school of fish



Collective Noun

a flock of birds



Collective Noun

a swarm of bees



Collective Noun

a litter of kittens



Collective Noun

a pack of dogs



Collective Noun

a pride of lions



Collective Noun

a herd of buffalo



Collective Noun

a crew of sailors



Collective Noun

a fleet of ships



Collective Noun

a class of children



Collective Noun

a deck of cards



Collective Noun

a panel of experts



Collective Noun

a basket of fruit



Collective Noun

a bunch of grapes



Collective Noun

a bunch of bananas



Collective Noun

a string of pearls



Collective Noun

a bouquet



**A bouquet of flowers is redundant.
All bouquets *are* flowers!
A bouquet of roses *is*
more descriptive.**



Good job.

We make a great *team*!

The collective noun *team* can also be plural.

The two *teams* are playing this weekend.

Now we use a plural verb.

See the next page for more than one family.

Collective Noun

families



Two **families** are going on a picnic.

Oddball Collective Noun **police**



Strangely, the collective noun police gets a plural verb. "In Thailand, police *are* required to wear a Hello Kitty armband if they break the law."