

ANT TUMBLERS

Scientists studying a certain kind of ant in the treetops of Peru have made an amazing discovery. The ants don't have wings. But the scientists noticed that, if the ants fall from their treetop home, they don't fall all the way down to the ground. Instead, the ants are somehow able to glide back to the tree trunk and grab on to the bark!

The ants use their bodies sort of like parachutes to slow their fall. But how do they control their glides? The scientists aren't sure. They think the ants may be moving their flattened heads and hind legs—just like a plane uses wing flaps to change direction.

Gliding works out much better for these ants than falling. They'd survive a fall to the ground, but chances are good they'd be gobbled up there by predators. Or they'd have a very long climb back up the tree! 🦉

