BEST ANTS UK | ANT CARE SHEET

Keeping ants since 1997

Advanced

Trachymyrmex septentrionalis

Northern fungus-gardening ant

> The world's most northern fungus-growing ant, feeding its fungus garden with dry plant bits, flower parts and caterpillar droppings. A North American ant, not sold by Best Ants UK and possibly illegal or impossible to import to the UK.

ORIGIN

Eastern USA

Sandy pine barrens and open woodland

FUNGUS CHAMBER

22–25°C

Never above about 28°C; never heat the nest directly (condensation). Warm the room or an outer box to 22–25°C

OUTWORLD TEMPERATURE

18°C night, up to 28°C day

By day like the fungus chamber or a degree or two cooler

HUMIDITY

Fungus chamber 80–90%

Outworld about 50%, waste area 30–40%

WINTER

Natural winter rest

About 8 weeks at 8–10°C only in a hibernation unit

MOVING IN

Straight into the setup

After up to 5 hours unopened; colony with fungus only

SIZE

Queen 5–7 mm

Workers 3–4.5 mm, one size, bumpy

COLONY

One queen

A few hundred to a few thousand ants

Food

- **Fungus food, every day:** oak catkins (fresh, or frozen and thawed), fresh tender shoots and small flower buds, fresh pesticide-free rose petals and soft leaves such as bramble and oak

- **Snacks only:** oat flakes, polenta and dried petals, now and then in small amounts; leftovers out after 2 days
- **Carbohydrates:** a tiny drop of Ant Honey or Ant Nectar now and then; no protein jelly or insects needed
- A little at a time on tin foil or a feeding dish in the outworld; remove anything soggy or mouldy at once. Pesticide-free only

Water

- Distilled or purified water only, never tap, rain or mineral water, even boiled.
- Pipette a few drops into the damp part of the fungus chamber, away from the fungus, whenever the meter drops below 80%; never drip on the fungus, never puddles. Check every day.
- Never water the outworld (about 50%); keep the waste area dry (30–40%).

Best setup

- No Best Ants UK ant farm for fungus growers: humid fungus chamber with a digital meter, ventilated foraging area, dry waste area emptied weekly
- Arrives in a fungus container (sometimes the fungus separately): unopened up to 5 hours, then straight into the setup
- Escape risk: small, good climbers. PTFE Fluon band on the top inner edge of the outworld lid, reapplied every 2–4 weeks

Good to know

- North American ant: not sold by Best Ants UK, and possibly illegal or impossible to import to the UK. We never encourage importing ants
- Not a true leafcutter: feeds its fungus on catkins, buds, petals and soft leaves. Healthy fungus is white and spongy; yellow = too wet, shrinking = too dry
- Never release it. Can't keep it? See our ant adoption page

Read the full care guide **All our ant care sheets**

Best Ants UK care sheet. These notes cover the essentials only: read the full care guide and our ant farm setup guide from A to Z.