**BEST ANTS UK | ANT CARE SHEET**

Keeping ants since 1997

**Beginner***

# *Aphaenogaster picea*

Winnow ant

A long-legged, calm woodland ant from eastern North America that carries woodland flower seeds home and helps them spread. A North American ant, not sold by Best Ants UK and possibly illegal or impossible to import to the UK.

ORIGIN

**Eastern North America**

SE Canada to the eastern USA; rotting logs, stumps, under stones

NEST TEMPERATURE

**24–28°C**

Active season; heater at 24°C under one quarter of the nest in cool homes

OUTWORLD TEMPERATURE

**18°C night, up to 28°C day**

By day like the nest or a degree or two cooler

HUMIDITY

**Nest 50–70%**

Outworld about 50%, never watered

WINTER

**Rest Oct–Mar, 5–8°C**

Hibernation unit only, cooled and warmed gradually; nest slightly damp, no food. Not in a queen's first year

MOVE TO A NEST

**10+ workers**

15–20 is better, a queen on her own too

SIZE

**Queen about 7–7.5 mm**

Workers 3.5–5.5 mm, long-legged, dark with a reddish-brown thorax

COLONY

**One queen**

A few hundred workers, sometimes more

## Food

- **Proteins:** Protein Jelly (keep in the fridge) or Cricket Mash, the most important food. Live food only for established colonies: scalded, cut in half
- **Carbohydrates:** organic Ant Honey or Ant Nectar, far better than sugar water or home-made mixes; small drops

- Twice a week, small amounts, outworld only; leftovers out after 2 days. Founding queen: a tiny drop of protein jelly on tin foil once a week

## Water

- Distilled or purified water only. Never tap, rain or bottled mineral water, even boiled (mould and fungus).
- Pipette a few drops through the watering hole; stop when 1–2 drops appear inside. About once a week, or when the meter drops below 50%.
- Never water the outworld; keep it at about 50% humidity. A watering test tube in the outworld gives a safe drink.

## Best setup

- A7 Plus ant farm kit (small nest, built-in digital meter); Nest + Outworld option if you already have your ants
- Advanced Heating System Small 4W under one quarter of the nest, opposite the watering area, set to 24°C (in cool homes)
- Daylight, never direct sunlight; away from windows, radiators, vibrations, speakers and kitchens
- Escape risk: quick, long-legged 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
- Colonies are slow to start; often buries sweet drops with debris to carry them home. Small sting, harmless to people
- 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.