BEST ANTS UK | ANT CARE SHEET

Keeping ants since 1997

Intermediate

Veromessor andrei

Andre's harvester ant

A reddish-brown seed harvester from coastal California that moves house more often than almost any other ant. A North American ant, not sold by Best Ants UK and possibly illegal or impossible to import to the UK.

ORIGIN

Coastal California

Southern Oregon to northern Baja California, open grassland

NEST TEMPERATURE

24–28°C

Advanced Heating System Small at 26°C, under a quarter of the nest

OUTWORLD TEMPERATURE

18°C night, up to 28°C day

By day like the nest or a degree or two cooler

HUMIDITY

Gradient: seeds 10–30%, brood corner 50–60%

Never hydrate the whole nest. Outworld about 50%, never watered

WINTER

2–3 month rest at 17–18°C

Never below 15°C; no rest in a queen's first year

MOVE TO A NEST

10+ workers

15–20 is better, a lone queen too

SIZE

Queen about 10 mm

Workers about 4.5–7 mm, mostly one size

COLONY

Tens of thousands of workers

May move nest several times a year

Food

- **Seeds:** our harvester seed mix is the main food, on tin foil or a feeding dish, never on the substrate (sprouted seeds are harmful)
- **Proteins:** Protein Jelly once a week, for example every Monday (keep it in the fridge)

- **Carbohydrates:** organic Ant Honey or Ant Nectar once a week on another day, for example every Thursday (they often take little sugar); far better than sugar water
- Feed in the outworld only and remove leftovers after 2 days. Founding queen (she forages in the wild): a tiny drop of protein jelly plus a few small seeds on tin foil once a week
- Buy food only from established ant-keeping suppliers: bird seed, dried mealworms and pet-shop live food often carry blood-sucking mites

Water

- Distilled or purified water only, never tap, rain or mineral water, even boiled
- Pipette a drop at a time through the watering hole: no more than 1 drop should leak into the nest; water the brood corner only, never the whole nest
- Never open water (they can drown): a watering test tube in the outworld, never a water dispenser; never water the outworld

Best setup

- Angie or A7 Plus ant farm, both with a pre-installed digital meter
- Daylight, never direct sunlight; away from windows, radiators, vibration, speakers and kitchens
- Escape risk: a restless colony that tests every gap. PTFE Fluon band around the top inner edge of the outworld lid, reapplied about every 4 weeks (every 2 weeks for 300+ ants)

Good to know

- Not known as a danger to people, but defends its nest and can bite: never handle them
- On arrival: parcel unopened for 5 hours, then 4–5 days of complete rest in its packaging
- Foragers march out in columns up to about 20 metres long, then spread out to gather seeds

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.