Advanced, adults only

Odontomachus infandus

Philippine trap-jaw ant

A big trap-jaw ant from the shady, humid forests of the Philippines that snaps its jaws shut to catch prey and has a painful sting. Not sold by Best Ants UK and possibly illegal or impossible to import to the UK.

ORIGIN
The Philippines
Luzon and Mindoro; leaf litter of shady, humid forest, lowland to mountains

NEST TEMPERATURE
24–28°C all year
Advanced Heating System Small at about 26°C, under a quarter of the nest

OUTWORLD TEMPERATURE
21°C night, up to 28°C day
By day like the nest or a degree or two cooler

HUMIDITY
Nest 60–80%
Outworld about 50%, never watered

WINTER
No hibernation
Tropical: keep warm all year and keep feeding

MOVE TO A NEST
10+ workers
Start with a colony, never a lone queen

SIZE
Queen 15–16 mm
Workers 12–16 mm, blackish brown, lighter brown head, long jaws

COLONY
Usually one queen
A few hundred workers; semi-claustral founding

Food

- **Proteins:** Protein Jelly for young colonies (keep it in the fridge). Established colonies only: small crickets or cockroach nymphs, scalded first, cut in half, given with long tweezers
- **Carbohydrates:** a tiny drop of organic Ant Honey or Ant Nectar as an extra, once or twice a week
- Twice a week, small amounts, outworld only, on tin foil or a feeding dish; leftovers out after 2 days. Founding queen: a tiny drop of protein jelly on tin foil once a week

- Buy food only from established ant-keeping suppliers: about half of pet-shop live food carries blood-sucking mites

Water

- Distilled or purified water only, never tap, rain or mineral water, even boiled
- Pipette a few drops at a time through the watering hole and stop when 1 or 2 drops appear inside; water when the meter drops below 60%
- A watering test tube in the outworld for drinking; never water the outworld

Best setup

- A7 Plus with its pre-installed digital meter; the A6 with Meter as the colony grows into the hundreds
- Daylight, never direct sunlight; away from windows, radiators, vibration, speakers and kitchens. Test tube warmth: a heating cable at the cotton stopper end only, never a heat mat
- Escape risk: fast and can jump. PTFE Fluon band around the top inner edge of the outworld lid, reapplied about every 4 weeks (every 2 weeks for 300+ ants); lid closed

Good to know

- Strong, painful sting: never handle them, adults only, always long tweezers
- The jaws snap shut in a fraction of a millisecond, and a frightened worker can flip itself into the air
- On arrival: parcel unopened for 5 hours, then 4–5 days of complete rest. Never a fridge, shed or garage

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.