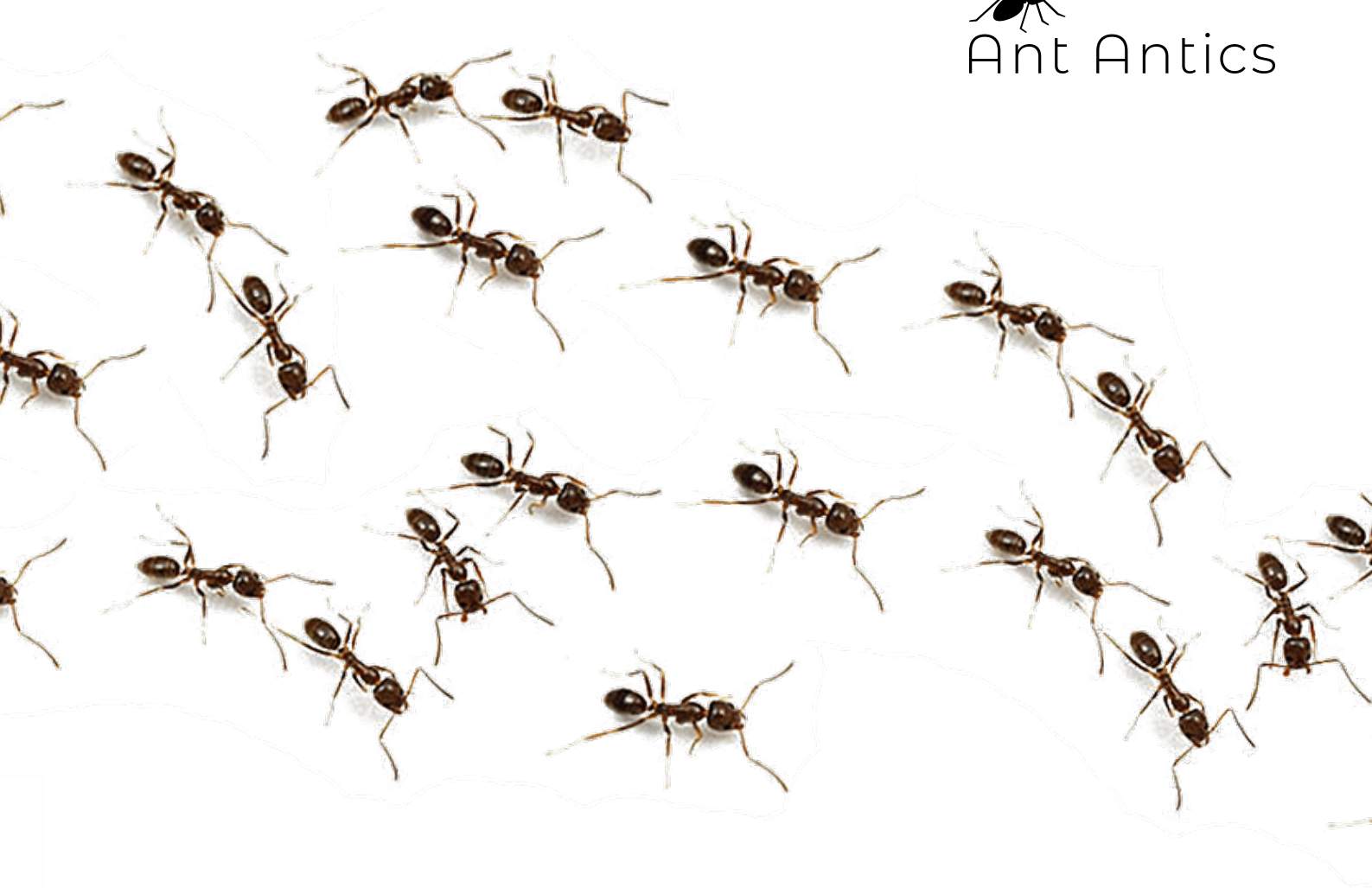




Ant Antics

THE EUROPEAN FIRE ANTS

MINI CARE GUIDE | 2020



READY TO GO?

WAITING IS THE FIRST THING.

That's right, sit back and let your queen wait in the dark for the next hour, nice and quiet so she relaxes after her journey.

OPEN AND CHECK HER

Once calm, carefully open and check her to make sure she made the journey ok. Once happy put her back away at the right temp then check her twice weekly for feeding.

If she has workers now, feed her and resume twice weekly feeds until 30+ workers.

FIRST BITE

Once you have workers add a tiny drop of our very own sugar snap for an energy boost. Remove uneaten snap the following feed and replace with protein, these critters need lots of protein and carbs twice weekly.

WARM AND SNUGLY

*The temperature of the nest should sit between **21 and 25 degrees, for EU** species and between **20 and 24 degrees for Uk Native** species - ideally with a gradient. Exceeding 30 degrees could make your queen infertile and should be avoided.*

HUMIDITY IS KEY

Fire ants are very moisture sensitive and need high humidity in their nest. Ideally with a gradient aim for 60% to 90%, many keepers prefer the higher. Choose what works best for your colony.

EU FIRE ANTS

Myrmica Rubra* & *Manica Rubida, also known as the **European fire ant** or **common red ant**, is a species of ant of the genus *Myrmica* | *Manica*, found all over Europe and is now invasive in some parts of North America and Asia. It is mainly red in colour, with slightly darker pigmentation on the head. These ants live under stones and fallen trees, and in soil. They are very aggressive, often attacking rather than running away, and are equipped with a sting (like a stinging nettle sensation), though they lack the ability to spray formic acid like the genus *Formica*.

This ant's colonies have a polygyne form and can include up to one hundred queens per nest. These queens will have gathered together after their nuptial flight, formed a nest and laid their eggs in it. The species is also polydomous, with many nest sites per individual colony. The queens can live up to fifteen years. Nuptial flights take place normally in late July to mid-August in Europe. Hundreds of young queens and males take to the air to mate together. Afterwards, the males die and the queens shed their wings to make a new colony.



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COLONY INFO

Fire ants vary greatly between species and with so many on hand generalised information is fairly vague in a booklet like this. Overall they are great scavengers and formidable attackers, with extensive tunnels and satellite nests.

Polygene?

Both Manica and Murmica are polygenous, this means they will found a colony with multiple queens from their mating flights, a typical colony can house anything up to 100 queens.

Defense and Aggression:

Picture the worst, most brutal army you can imagine and shrink them to the size of ants, you now get it. Rather than run, these critters will assault and mass in numbers to sting and bite their victim to death.

Colony Growth

Your colony will grow rapidly. Developing brood at an impressive rate. Each feed every few days you will see more brood and workers forming.

Typically each queen will have a colony size of 1,000 workers,

When you do see various sizes of brood you can begin to predict when they will hatch out.

Egg 20 to 15 days

Larvae 20 to 24 days

Pupae 20 to 24 days

Total Egg to Adult 8 to 11 weeks

Manica Rubida

Queen 9mm-13mm

Worker 6mm-9mm

Murmica Rubra

Queen 5mm-6mm

Worker 4mm-6mm

Age: Queen ants can live up to 15 years old with workers ranging from 3-6 months for the nanitics to 1-2 years for adults.

FIRST WORKERS

Your first generation of workers (around 7 to 10) are known as nanitics, these are around half size and are the life of the colony.



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Fire ants need protein, lots of protein and lots of sugar.

KEEP A VARIED DIET

Food quantities will vary significantly with colony size. Our advice is to place food in the outworld and remove un-eaten food after 3 days. Repeat every 3 days. Use this to judge colony requirements.

Aphids

if you are in a position to offer them in a natural setup then you can place them in and watch your ants defend and farm them for their sweet secretion. As a plant dies, place in a fresh one and you will see your ants move their "cattle" to the fresh one to continue their lives.

Sugars & Fruits

Its really simple to do this, you can use a 1 to 1 mix of sugar and water heated until dissolved. or you can feed them small pieces of fruit to gain extra nutrients.

We also sell our handmade, organic Sugar Snap which will be sure to give your colony an energy boost filled with sugars, B-Vitamins and Electrolytes.

Protein

Proteins i large amounts are needed by fire ants without exception. With such fast colony growth rates the growing young need lots of protein to hatch. This can be done using insects (if using your own meal-worms, crickets e.t.c please dispatch them before feeding)

*OR by using specially formulated feeds like our Protein Shake.
and Protein Jelly.*



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FEEDING

30+ WORKERS

You have done it. Reaching 30 workers is the pivotal moment in an antkeepers progress. Keeping a colony running with patience will now pay off. You can look at introducing them into your very own nest and ourworld setup.

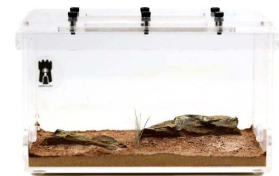
Our advice will always be a natural setup, however these are the most costly to make and require the most maintenance. Fire ants love digging, a sand\clay mix is ideal for them.

However, if this is not right for you they will also be quite at home in an acrylic nest or a ytong. You need to keep high levels of humidity and ytong is great for that.

These ants LOVE 70-90% humidity.

INTRODUCTION TO SETUP

Its easy, connect their test tube or place it in the outworld and leave the daylight on it. They will find themselves a lovely new home. Dont rush them, dont force them out with light or heat. They will move when they are happy too, it could be days or weeks before they are ready!



From top to bottom. Acrylic Nest, Sandwich Nest, Digging nest/outworld, Outworld



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TIPS

Moving Test Tube

Sometimes you may find yourself needing to move their test tube to a clean one, only do this if completely required (i.e the old one had mold growing). To change the tube simply make a new one with water/cotton wool and attach it to the old one using a plaster to hold them closed loosely. A plaster is breathable, do not use tape.

The you need to allow your queen to make the move on her own, this can be helped by putting the old tube away from your heat source and by covering the new tube so its dark. The old tube exposed to light will no longer be the best choice. REMEMBER, your queen will not be forced, it could take weeks to move, just be patient.

Hibernation

Check you species product page on antantics.co.uk to check hibernation requirements.

Nesting

When choosing a nest, make sure it is the correct size for your colony. Too big and your queen will not feel safe and will slow production. Ytong is absolutely perfect for humidity when you choose the correct size for them.

Hydration

Add water to the nest on the same day each week, this will help you remember and not run the risk of a dry nest.

KEEP ANTS OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN



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HELP?

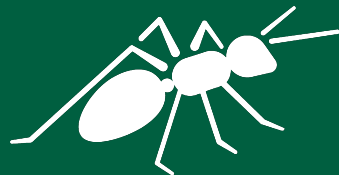
For help and support, visit our website www.antantics.co.uk where you will find useful advice and products to help you.

WE STOCK

Queens, Nests, Outworlds, Food, Feeders, Decorations, Sand and so much more!

*It is **AGAINST** the **LAW** to release non-native species of ant into the wild. **BEFORE** you open the door to release them visit antantics.co.uk/unwanted-colonies*

A Queen ant can live up to 30 years - Buy responsibly!



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WWW.ANTANTICS.CO.UK