

## LASIUS FLAVUS COLONY

### 8 April 2006

Today my new *Lasius flavus* colony arrived from the German company Ant Store, and only took 2 days to arrive! They consist of 1 fertile queen, 8 workers, but no brood.

As usual with Ant Store the ants arrived in a glass test tube which was sealed with a cotton wool bung. I placed some tin foil around the tube so as to prevent light from getting in and stressing the ants out more than they must have been as a result of the postal journey. I then put the tube into their new home and removed the bung.

At time of writing they have not ventured out of the tube.

### 12 April 2006

They have not moved out of their tube yet and I don't think they have even explored anywhere other than the tube, unless they have done so at night. I can just about see into the tube and can see the queen alive and well, surrounded by her workers. It is possible that they will stay in the tube until they start to increase their size colony. I have learnt by bad mistakes too many times in the past by being too impatient with ants. When they are ready they will move out into the tank.

### 15 April 2006

The ants have now moved out of their tube after having spend several days without even having stepped foot outside of the tube. I believe they are currently nesting under a piece of slate that is in the tank. The grass seeds I planted have began to spring up from the ground, and I am hoping that the ants will nest under it just as they do in our gardens. I have seen one or two workers out foraging over the past 24 hours.

### 1 May 2006

It would seem that I was wrong; the ants have not nested under the slate, but have dug a hole in the soil not too far from one of the sides of the tank. I have seen a few workers emerging from the nest, but as is typical with *flavus*, you don't usually see them.

### **7 May 2006**

There have been a few workers out foraging among the grass that is growing in this tank. I placed in a piece of cockroach, a blob of Ant Jelly, and a small piece of tangerine into their tank; so far they have been visiting the tangerine and ignoring the other two items. They have also expanded the size of the entrance to their nest very slightly.

### **14 May 2006**

This colony has been fairly active over the past week with a lot of exploring the grass area of the tank, and some foraging/feeding too. No noticeable further nest expansion, though these ants usually do not build mounds in captivity, so they may well be taking the soil granules they have dug up to another area of the tank.

### **31 May 2006**

Much the same to report as last update; they are still foraging in small numbers, but do seem to be quite bold in their exploration, though remaining within the tank.

### **24 June 2006**

I have been away for the past few weeks and so have not been able to study these ants during that time. As I look in the tank today I see very little activity other than a few workers doing the Dockyard Bimble. Some did emerge to eat from a fly, but once these ants have eaten their fill they tend to stay underground until hunger drives them up again.

### **23 July 2006**

Due to the fact that I have been away (again) for the past few weeks, I have not been able to see much of these ants. They do continue to be active in their foraging, but nothing more exciting than that I'm afraid.

### **21 November 2006**

**HIBERNATING.**

### **6 February 2007**

Still hibernating but I just wanted to add that at long last I have cleared out the garden shed, something I have been meaning to do since last spring, but were too lazy to do it. Well, now the shed is clear and the tank has been moved from the house. The shed is not heated in any way

and therefore is colder even than the ant room with its radiator switched off and window open. The shed also has a comfy chair in it for me to sit back in, relax and watch the ants – once they wake up that is. (A picture of the tanks in the shed can be found on the “My Ant Colonies” page.)

### **7 April 2007**

At long last! These ants have finally emerged from hibernation, though foraging is still very slow, at least during the day anyway. They have been feeding on a piece of Ant Jelly, but I have only seen one small worker out of the nest at any one time.

### **17 May 2007**

The other day I placed a fresh piece of Ant Jelly into the flavus tank and 8 workers were seen eating from it about half an hour later. I have put in a piece of freshly killed cockroach, but so far the ants haven't been up to investigate; perhaps they stuffed their faces with too much Ant Jelly.

### **17 June, 2007**

These ants have continued to put in an appearance above ground and I have also noticed that there appears to have been a little nest expansion going on, with a tiny mound of dirt appearing in a corner of the tank. Now that these ants have started to forage above ground perhaps they are starting to bring in enough food for the queen to produce larvae. At long last!

### **13 July 2007**

Nothing new really to report on this colony; I am very tempted to order another starter kit from Antstore and move this colony into it, that would enable me to see inside this secret colony and therefore be able to study them far easier. A few workers have been foraging above ground, but nothing to get excited about ☺

### **5 August 2007**

Nothing to report other than I saw a lone worker foraging today and it was tiny. This seems to suggest to me that the larvae are not getting enough food, despite the fact that I feed them regularly.

### **15 August 2007**

Nothing new to report I'm afraid.

**9 September 2007**

Nothing new to report again I'm afraid.

**6 October 2007**

I have not seen a single worker from this colony over the past 2 months, and so I have no idea if they are even still alive. Although they share a tank with a colony of *Myrmica ruginodis*, I have found no evidence that the rugs have discovered and/or destroyed them. Therefore I will not update this journal unless something happens.

**22 October 2007**

Hibernating!

**9 August 2008**

I have seen no sign of these ants in almost one year, and can only assume they have been destroyed by the *Myrmica ruginodis*, who are now living in the part of the tank once occupied by the flavus ants.

**JOURNAL CLOSED**