

MANICA RUBIDA COLONY JOURNAL

15 August 2007

I obtained this colony of European Myrmicine ants yesterday from Antstore, consisting of about 20 workers, 1 queen, and a few larvae (2, I think). They are similar in appearance to *Myrmica rubra/scabrinodis/ruginodis*, but are much larger. Their workers are about the size of the queens of the aforementioned *Myrmica* species, with some workers being on par in size with a worker of *Formica rufa*, only slender. The queen is one big mamma! These ants are very aggressive and just seem to want to attack anything that even looks at them in the wrong way. I would not like to get stung by one of these babies!

I have placed these ants into an Antstore Starter Kit.

9 September 2007

These ants have been tunnelling so much in the nesting box, that all the sand they have dug up has now obscured the portion of the nesting box that was 'above ground', and so now the whole nesting box is filled with sand. Some of the excess sand has also been placed in the tube between the nesting box and the foraging tank, with some particles in the foraging tank itself.

They continue to be very active, and aggressive! I was reaching into the tank the other day when my fingers brushed too closely to one of the large workers, who immediately went for me. Luckily I got my fingers out of the way in time, as I said before; I would not like to get a bite or sting from these babies!

6 October 2007

I have not seen anything of these ants over the past few weeks, and it appears that they have not been foraging at all, and that their nest building activities have come to a stop. Due to the fact that the outside temperature, particularly at night, has been dropping, it is probable that these ants are preparing for hibernation.

22 October 2007

Hibernating!

15 April 2008

No more Austinitus for these ants; they are now out of hibernation. A couple were seen in the plastic tubing that connects the foraging tank to the nesting box, and 1 worker was seen feeding on a cricket in the foraging box. Activity is still slow at the moment as can be expected.

28 April 2008

I have placed this ant farm into my bedroom as well, just really so I can watch them whilst in bed (yeah sad, I know). Their activity is increasing all the time and last night there were half a dozen workers feasting on a piece of cricket I put in their foraging tank 2 weeks ago. Today I removed it and replaced it with some fresh cricket. I removed the lid from the nesting box the other just to see if there anything interesting to see. The ants have done so much excavation work that the gap between "ground level" of the sand and the lid itself is completely filled with sand. I also noticed 2 tunnels emerging from the sand on either end of a small walkway on the very top of this sand. There were two angry workers on the underside of the lid, and I was almost stung! These ants have created huge tunnels deeper down and I had a fairly clear view into the queen's chamber. She appeared to be well, and I also noticed some rather fat larvae present.

08 May 2008

There has been some increased activity in the foraging tank over the past week or so, with some rather large and fierce looking ants exploring the tank. They are currently eating from a freshly killed cricket I have put into their tank and pieces apple too.

There has also been further nest expansion too.

9 August 2008

Today I put a piece of freshly killed cockroach into the Manica tank, and within moments there were 10-12 ants on it; this is the most ants I have seen from this colony being out at any one time, other than their initially being placed into the set up. Perhaps there are a lot of brood present now ☺

09 November 2008

HIBERNATING!

8 March 2009

This week the Manica's decided to get out of bed and shake of their hibernation bleariness. I saw one of the wandering about in the foraging tank and so put in a bit of Ant Jelly. Within half hour, when I checked on them again, there were 5 workers eating from the jelly. I also noticed two dead workers had been brought out of the nest and dumped unceremoniously in one corner of the tank; obviously these did not make it through the winter sleep. I can't see the queen bit seeing as her body is not laying out in the tank I can only assume that she is alive and well in the depths of the nest.

14 March 2009

Despite last week's flurry of activity, I haven't seen one ant out and about. Perhaps they have all gone back to bed, though, of course, I am not sitting in front of the tank 24 hours a day. I will feed them later today.

25 April 2009

Not too much to report this update. There have been a few ants out foraging and there is one out now as I type this update. I will feed them some ant jelly in a moment.