

## **TAPINOMA ERRATICUM COLONY JOURNAL**

### **15 August 2007**

I obtained this colony of Dolichoderinae sub-family species of ant yesterday from Antstore, consisting of 25-30 workers, 1 queen, and a nice pile of brood. They are very small, black ants, smaller than *Lasius niger*, and move in a very erratic manner, hence their name. They also tend to run with their abdomens slightly raised. Unlike many other ants they do not sting or use formic acid, but instead pass a viscous defensive fluid through their abdomen which they smear on their enemies.

I have placed these ants into an Antstore Starter Kit.

### **9 September 2007**

I annoyed these ants the other day! I could see that they had tunnelled into the sand as there was sand piled up against the sided of the glass above 'ground level'. I lifted the lid to remove some rotting food that was in the nesting box, and larvae dropped out from underneath it. They had placed all their larvae on the underside of the lid, and the sand must have been walls built up around them. The workers became very angry and rushed about, some of them running out of the nesting box. It took me a while to gently coax them all back inside, remove the food, and replace the lid.

### **6 October 2007**

I have seen very little 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. Saying that though, although it is evident that the ants have been digging into the sand, due to the amount of sand piled on the surface, it appears that they may be living on the surface. They are certainly keeping their brood on the surface, though I admit that I cannot see clearly without removing the lid and thereby upsetting the ants. 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!

### **9 March 2008**

These ants still are living on the surface and despite having built up a sand wall around themselves; they show no signs of wanting to tunnel. However, it has been very cold over the past few months (for ants at least) and so I guess they really haven't had the energy to dig. I have seen 2 dead workers who had been carried to the opposite side of the nesting box. So far as I am aware these ants have not ventured into the foraging box, neither does it appear that they have eaten.

### **15 April 2008**

I have not seen much of these ants since the last update, though I do not get to check on the as often as I like. No longer hibernating, and still living on the surface of the sand.

### **08 May 2008**

I saw a worker from this colony in the foraging tank a couple of days ago, but nothing when checking on them a moment ago, despite having fed them 2 hours ago. I am sure they are fine though.

### **13 June 2008**

This colony is dead :( All workers and the queen were found dead on the surface of the sand. The nesting box has been cleaned, sand replaced, and placed open into the Tetra 1 colony to see what they would do with it (see that journal for further details).

**JOURNAL CLOSED**