

Acromyrmex octospinosus

(Reich, 1793)

A spiny, rough-skinned leafcutter that farms fungus on roses and bramble and cuts flowers and fruit as eagerly as leaves.



Photo: Elias Freyhof (eliasfrehof36614), CC BY 4.0



At a glance



NEST TEMPERATURE

23–27 °C

In the nest



NEST HUMIDITY

80–95 %

In the nest



HIBERNATION

Not needed



NUPTIAL FLIGHTS

May – Jul

After rain



WORKERS

2–9 mm

majors up to 12 mm



QUEEN

12–14 mm

One queen



COLONY SIZE

Reaches 20,000 workers

Growth: Fast



ESCAPE RISK

High

Escape artists: use a closed outworld and a good barrier



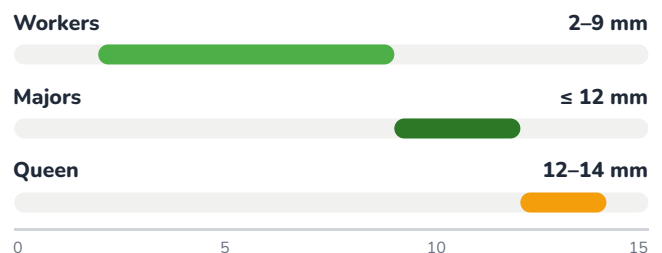
Year at a glance



Months in the native range of the species. The weather decides the exact days, and colonies kept indoors can follow a different rhythm.



Sizes on the same scale



Care at a glance

FOOD

Fresh leaves

Sugar

BEST NESTS

1. Acrylic nest
2. Naturalistic setup

WHY THIS RATING

- ✓ No hibernation to manage
- ⚠ A real escape artist that needs an escape-proof setup
- ⚠ Semi-claustral: the founding queen has to be fed
- ⚠ Needs a fungus garden fed with fresh leaves every day
- ⚠ Colonies get huge and need room to expand



Notes from keepers

TIP

Keep the fungus under a small hood and let the colony set its own humidity. When the air gets too dry the workers may carry the garden to the wettest spot they can find: after one keeper's hygrometer silently failed, they moved most of the fungus under damp rose leaves in the feeding area. Check the hygrometer against a second one, and warm the air around the setup rather than the garden itself.

WATCH OUT

A single sprayed flower can wreck a small colony. After a rose picked on a trip, workers stood motionless or drowned in the sugar water, nearly half of the colony died and the fungus shrank. Only use plants you know are untreated.