

Camponotus barbaricus

Emery, 1905

A shy, mostly nocturnal giant of the western Mediterranean that starts slowly, then grows into a huge colony once it has real warmth.



Photo: Jonghyun Park, CC BY 4.0

At a glance



NEST TEMPERATURE
25–30 °C

In the nest



NEST HUMIDITY
40–60 %

In the nest



HIBERNATION
12–18 °C

Nov – Feb



NUPTIAL FLIGHTS
Jun – Aug

Hot days, Calm weather



WORKERS
6–12 mm

majors up to 16 mm



QUEEN
16–18 mm

One queen



COLONY SIZE
Reaches 10,000 workers

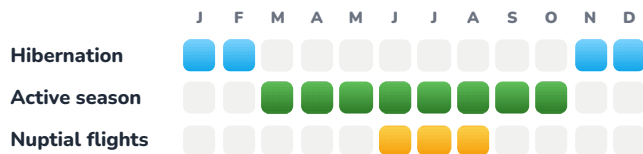
Growth: Fast



ESCAPE RISK
Medium

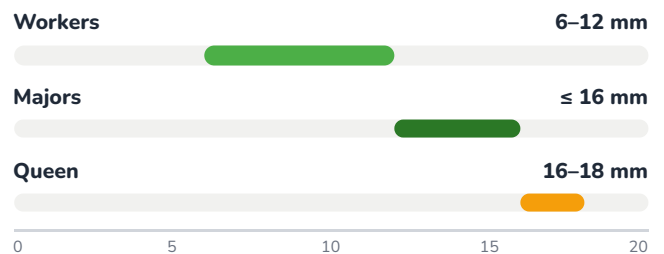
Keep an escape barrier on the outworld

Year at a glance



Months for temperate Europe and the Mediterranean. The weather decides the exact days, so flights can come earlier or later where you live.

Sizes on the same scale



Care at a glance

FOOD

Sugar

Insects

BEST NESTS

1. Ytong nest
2. Acrylic nest
3. Naturalistic setup

WHY THIS RATING

- ✓ Fully claustral: the queen needs no food until her first workers arrive
- ⚠ Curious workers: keep an escape barrier on the outworld
- ⚠ Colonies get huge and need room to expand

Notes from keepers

TIP

Heat only one side of the nest. One colony stayed tiny for years at room temperature and took off after a heat mat was added, and since eggs, young larvae and pupae choose different spots, a warm end with a cooler corner works best.

WATCH OUT

Do not rely on smooth glass or a thin coating, because the workers climb vertical glass, walk upside down and in one journal walked straight over a PTFE spray. Keep lids tight with no gaps, and feed in an outworld rather than inside the test tube, where some workers rush out and get lost when it is opened.