

Camponotus pennsylvanicus

(De Geer, 1773)

Eastern black carpenter ant

The big black carpenter ant of eastern North America, a slow-growing night forager that nests in trees and damp wood.



Photo: daksu, CC BY 4.0



At a glance



NEST TEMPERATURE

22–27 °C

In the nest



NEST HUMIDITY

50–70 %

In the nest



HIBERNATION

5–10 °C

Oct – Feb



NUPTIAL FLIGHTS

Apr – Jul

Hot days, Calm weather



WORKERS

6–10 mm

majors up to 13 mm



QUEEN

15–18 mm

One queen



COLONY SIZE

No data yet

Growth: Moderate



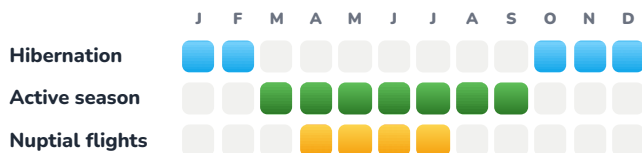
ESCAPE RISK

Medium

Keep an escape barrier on the outworld



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

Sugar

Insects

BEST NESTS

1. Ytong nest
2. Wooden 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
- ⚠ Needs a cold hibernation, for example in a fridge



Notes from keepers

TIP

Keep the founding queen in a dark, quiet spot and check on her rarely. Her first clutch is small and takes at least about 60 days to become workers. One keeper who checked a queen daily and moved her between three setups lost the early brood and waited about 87 days for the first worker. Ending the first year with 5 to 30 workers is normal.

WATCH OUT

Check cotton plugs and water barriers all year, including during the winter rest. The workers chew cotton, soft plastic and plaster, and one keeper found a hibernating colony drowned after it had chewed through the cotton in its test tube. Fluon or talc keeps them in on smooth walls, but oil or petroleum jelly on a vertical wall does not.