

Formica cinerea

Mayr, 1853

Big, fast and nervous: a formic acid sprayer that can reach 10,000 workers.



At a glance



NEST TEMPERATURE

21–27 °C

In the nest



NEST HUMIDITY

50–60 %

In the nest



HIBERNATION

5–8 °C

Oct – Mar



NUPTIAL FLIGHTS

Jun – Aug



WORKERS

4–8 mm

All the same size



QUEEN

8–11 mm

One or more queens



COLONY SIZE

Reaches 10,000 workers

Growth: Very fast



ESCAPE RISK

High

Escape artists: use a closed outworld and a good barrier



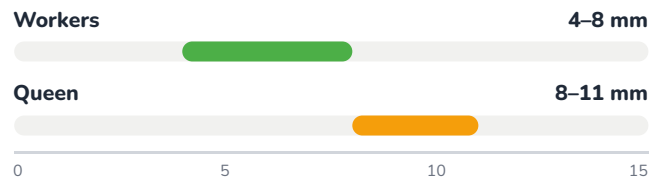
Year at a glance



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. Sandwich nest
3. Acrylic nest

WHY THIS RATING

- ✓ Fully claustrol: the queen needs no food until her first workers arrive
- ⚠ A real escape artist that needs an escape-proof setup
- ⚠ Needs a cold hibernation, for example in a fridge
- ⚠ Grows very fast and needs plenty of protein and space
- ⚠ Colonies get huge and need room to expand



From my colonies

TIP

A white Ytong nest suits this species well, because the almost black workers stand out against it and every chamber is easy to watch.

WATCH OUT

Escapes are most likely during outworld maintenance, because the workers move so fast and irregularly: work calmly and keep an eye on every ant until the setup is closed again.