

Formica fusca

Linnaeus, 1758

Silky ant

A shy, quick-footed black ant that forgives beginner mistakes and is the classic host of slave-making ants.



Photo: Jonghyun Park, CC BY 4.0

At a glance



NEST TEMPERATURE

21–25 °C

In the nest



NEST HUMIDITY

50–60 %

In the nest



HIBERNATION

5–8 °C

Oct – Mar



NUPTIAL FLIGHTS

Jun – Aug

Hot days



WORKERS

4–7 mm

All the same size



QUEEN

8–10 mm

One or more queens



COLONY SIZE

Reaches 2,000 workers

Growth: Moderate



ESCAPE RISK

Medium

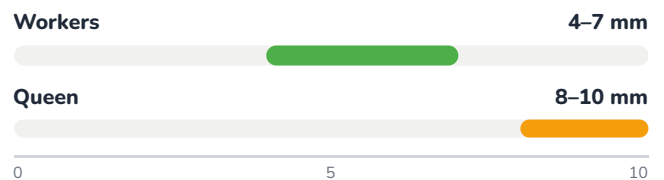
Keep an escape barrier on the outworld

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. Naturalistic setup
3. Sandwich nest

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

Give the nest a humid chamber and keep the outworld dry. The species comes from dry, open ground, and keepers report that a moist nest with a dry arena works well.

WATCH OUT

Leave a founding queen alone as much as you can. Keepers report queens that ate almost all their larvae after repeated checks and vibrations, so keep the tube dark, still and closed until the first workers appear.