

Myrmecocystus mexicanus

Wesmael, 1838

Mexican honeypot ant

A nocturnal desert ant whose swollen workers hang from the ceiling like golden jars to store the colony's sugar.



Photo: Jake Nitta (froggy143), CC BY 4.0

At a glance



NEST TEMPERATURE

26–30 °C

In the nest



NEST HUMIDITY

40–60 %

In the nest



HIBERNATION

Not needed



NUPTIAL FLIGHTS

Jul – Sep

After rain



WORKERS

4–8 mm

majors up to 9 mm



QUEEN

12–15 mm

One queen



COLONY SIZE

Reaches 5,000 workers

Growth: Fast



ESCAPE RISK

Medium

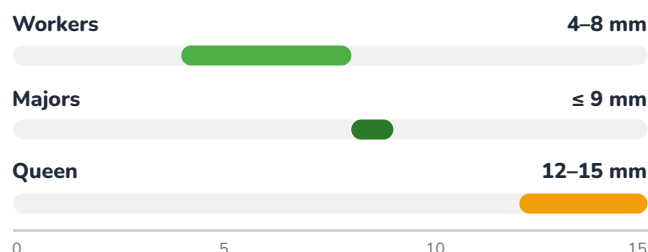
Keep an escape barrier on the outworld

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. Naturalistic setup
3. Acrylic nest

WHY THIS RATING

- ✓ Fully claustral: the queen needs no food until her first workers arrive
- ✓ No hibernation to manage
- ⚠ Curious workers: keep an escape barrier on the outworld
- ⚠ Needs constant warmth all year round

Notes from keepers

TIP

Heat only part of the nest so the ants can choose their spot, and test any new heater carefully: in one journal a queen was baked by a lamp. Then keep temperature, moisture and food steady, because an experienced keeper warns that a colony can collapse as fast as it grows.

WATCH OUT

Give the repletes a rough, solid ceiling to hang from, such as plaster, Ytong or a coated surface, because smooth glass and plastic are a poor grip and a replete that falls may not get back up. Keep the nest in a quiet spot, since vibrations and bright light unsettle the colony.