



















# Care sheet for your Lasius Niger

<https://www.bestantsuk.com/>

Introduction to Lasius Niger: A Popular British Ant Species

The *Lasius Niger queen ant*, also known as the black garden ant, is a common and easy-to-keep species among [British ant species](#). These small, black ants are generally docile and won't sting or bite. As one of the most prevalent [garden ants UK](#), they play an important role in the ecosystem and are essential for maintaining a balanced environment.

Latin Name:	 <i>Lasius (Lasius s. str.) Niger</i>
Trivialname:	 Black Garden Ant
Taxonomy:	 <b>Subfamily:</b> Formicinae, <b>Tribe:</b> Lasiini
Keeping Level:	1,2,3 <b>(1)</b> very easy in keeping
Distribution:	 Europe, North Africa, Asia, North America
Habitat:	 prefers sun exposed open land, often on rural areas and in anthropogenic disturbed land
Colonyform:	 Monogyne
Queen:	 <b>Size:</b> 9mm <b>Colour:</b> black; light brown shimmer
Worker:	 <b>Size:</b> 3 - 5mm <b>Colour:</b> black with light brown shimmer
Soldier:	 not present
Males:	 <b>Size:</b> 3,5 - 4,5mm <b>Colour:</b> black , slim
Nutrition:	 Honeywater and insects e.g. Dipterans like Flies or Mosquitos
Humidity:	 <b>Arena:</b> ~ 50% <b>Nestpart:</b> 70 - 80%
Temperature:	 <b>Arena:</b> 18 - 28°C <b>Nestpart:</b> 20 - 24°C
Hibernation:	 yes, from end of October until end of March at 10°C
Nestform:	 Build their nest in soil, under stones,
Kind of Formicaria:	 Farm, Basin, Frame basin, Island, Plaster
Formicaria size:	 <b>Size:</b> S - M
Substrate:	 <b>Farm:</b> Sand-Loam <b>Arena:</b> Sand-Loam
Planting:	 similar to forest- and sand areas, moss, grass and other plants

<b>Decoration:</b>		Branches, roots, tree needles, stones
<b>Description:</b>		Very tough and well-fortified ants, which will grow to a great colony by good support. Within 3 years they can reach a population up to 10.000 workers. In nature they cultivate sap insects on roses, elder, red-/black-currant and so on.
<b>Development:</b>		<b>Mating flight:</b> on warm days mid - may to the end of June at 22 - 26°C <b>founding:</b> claustral (without feeding) from egg to adult worker approx. 6 - 8 Weeks (egg to earvae: approx. 10 -12 days, larvae to pupae: approx. 10 -14 days, pupae to worker :approx. 10 - 24 days, depending on temperature). The main time of activity is between April to October. The lifespan of the queen can be up to 15 years (still not completely clear). <b>Colony size:</b> up to 40.000 Individuals
<b>Quantity:</b>		One fertilized queen with workers (see selection); brood (depending on the season and development)
<b>Weblinks:</b>		<a href="https://www.antwiki.org/wiki/Lasius_niger">https://www.antwiki.org/wiki/Lasius_niger</a>

### Habitat and Behaviour

Black ants UK prefer to nest in soil or under rocks, making them true masters of the soil nest. Known for their hardworking nature, Lasius Niger colonies can grow to over 10,000 workers, showcasing impressive ant colony size. This makes them a great choice among all UK ant species for those looking to start their ant-keeping journey with [Live Ants UK](#). You can find and observe a black ant's nest anywhere in the UK, even in your garden.

### Lifespan and Colony Structure

The black garden [ant queen lifespan](#) is remarkable, lasting up to 28 years and 9 months, even in laboratory conditions. This ant queen's longevity ensures the long-term success of your ant colony. The black ant UK workers, on the other hand, typically live for 1-2 years, contributing to the growth and success of the colony throughout their lifetime.

### Ant Development: From Egg to Adult

Understanding ant development is crucial for successful ant-keeping. Here's a breakdown of the egg-to-adult process for Lasius Niger ant workers:

1. Egg to larvae: Approximately 10-12 days
2. Ant larvae to pupae: About 10-14 days
3. Pupae to worker ants: Approximately 10-24 days (depending on temperature, 20-26 degrees C)

The entire process, from a freshly laid egg to an adult worker, takes about 6-8 weeks. This rapid development cycle contributes to the dynamic nature of ant colony size.

The first worker's lifespan is around three months.

### **Ants' arrival.**

#### **Black Garden Ant Farm - Lasius Niger Care Setting Up Your Ant Farm Formicarium**

---



**When you receive your ant habitat and colony, it's essential to follow these steps:**

1. Leave the parcel unopened for 4-5 hours at room temperature.
2. Check if your black ant queen is safe and sound.
3. Leave your ants undisturbed for 4-5 days to acclimate and chill out due to the delivery stress. Do not skip this step!
4. Keep them in a dark place with no vibrations, at a room temperature of 20-26°C.

**Do not disturb and Do not feed** your ant colony during this period (5 days after ants' arrival). Checking them once 24 hours after arrival is enough. [Avoiding toxins built up in your ants due to abrupt temperature changes is essential.](#)

**Please ensure the ant farm you have is suitable for live ants with a queen (if not purchased from us). Please do not make ants suffer! Find out more in this Ant Farm Guide: [Ant Farm Kits Everything You Need to Know Before Making a Purchase](#)**

### **Feeding Your Ants**

*Lasius Niger* queens are fully claustral, so feeding is not needed until the first workers, aka nanitics, arrive. This typically occurs around a month after the nuptial flight, also known as "flying ant day."

If you bought an ant colony (queen with workers), you must feed the ants once you connect their test tube to the ant farm.

Ant feeding is a crucial aspect of care for your *Lasius Niger* colony. Here's a guide to a proper ant diet:

- Feed protein-rich food and sweets twice a week and keep an eye on the queen ant's behaviour.
- Offer live insects ([Cricket mash](#)) and [Protein jelly](#) on Mondays and Fridays.
- Provide [Ant nectar](#) and [Ant Honey](#) or fruit on Wednesdays and Saturdays.
- For a small colony (queen and about 50 workers), use an amount of Cricket mash and protein jelly similar to a single grain of rice.
- Feed the ants into the ant farm's outworld only!
- Always remove uneaten food after 2 days to prevent fungal growth. [Video instructions? Click HERE!](#)

### **What Ant Farm?**

#### Choosing the Right Ant Farm

Once your colony has grown to about 10+ workers, consider moving them into an ant farm. For *Lasius Niger*, we recommend starting with a small ant farm, such as the [A7-sized nest](#) or the [A7 PLUS](#), which allows you to monitor temperature and humidity levels.

Both ant habitats are designed to maintain air humidity of about 70-80% if your room temperature is 22°C, pouring 1.5-2ml of bottled (mineral or

purified) water once a week ensures optimal conditions for your ant colony. With easy access to food and water in the outworld, your ants will be happy and healthy in their new home. Give your ants the best possible care and living space with our [Lasius Niger habitats](#). Do not get confused by some Lasius Niger care sheets, which state a moisture level, as it's different from the humidity levels.

**We have designed a special collection of [Ant Farms made for Kids so please have a look.](#)**

### **Escape prevention**

#### **Preventing Escapes**

To prevent large black ants UK from escaping during feeding, apply a 1-inch wide strip of [PTFE Fluon](#) around the top of the outworld. This creates a slippery barrier that ants cannot climb. Read our ant keeping guide for more information and priceless tips.

How to apply the *PTFE Fluon* Escape prevention. [Video instructions? Click HERE!](#)

### **Hibernation**

Hibernation: A Crucial Period for Black Ants UK

Many ant keepers wonder, "Do ants hibernate in the UK?" The answer is yes, and it's an essential part of their life cycle. Lasius Niger ants hibernate through the winter, typically waking up in late March or early April. To properly hibernate your ants:

1. Gradually reduce the nest temperature to around 10°C.
2. Lower the temperature by 0.2-0.3°C daily.
3. If using a refrigerator or wine cooler, ensure the temperature doesn't drop below 8°C.

During hibernation, the ants will be less active, so adjust your feeding schedule to once every 10-15 days. Just make sure they have a freshwater supply all the time.

**If you do not have the necessary skills or equipment to hibernate your ants, just do your best and move your ant farm to a colder room, such as a garage or similar. Bear in mind that they will hibernate in any scenario, no matter the environmental temperature.**

**The hibernation is NOT a must!**

Attempting to hibernate the ants is more likely to cause them harm than maintaining them at room temperature.

If you want to know how to hibernate your ants like a pro, read this guide:

[How to Keep Your Ants Safe During Hibernation: A Keeper's Essential Guide](#)

Learn how to avoid common mistakes in ant-keeping: [From Beginner to Pro: Mastering the Art of Ant Keeping and Creating a Thriving Ant Colony](#)

**Watering the habitat**

**Maintaining Your Ant Farm**



- **Change the water when it's finished or appears contaminated (cloudy, changes colour, etc.).**
- **Avoid direct sunlight on the setup to prevent sudden temperature changes.**
- **Maintain humidity levels between 75% and 85% for optimal colony health.**

**It is important to note** that gel farms are not a suitable habitat for *Lasius niger* ants, as they can quickly become mouldy and do not provide the necessary nutrition for the colony. To ensure the safety and well-being of these fascinating creatures, it is essential to provide them with a [proper ant farm](#) and diet.

**Avoid direct sunlight on the setup.**

The sun can heat the nest up to 5 degrees Celsius for only 5 minutes, so lots of toxins accumulate in the ants' bodies due to abrupt temperature changes. If the sun does not boil the ants alive before that, this can kill a worker ant for 1-3 days and a queen ant for 3-5 days.

**In conclusion, after more than three decades in this business, I can admit that the most important part of successful ant-keeping is your patience, and I mean it.**

**Fascinating Facts About Black Garden Ants**

Did you know that *Lasius Niger* ants can survive without food and water for extended periods? During active periods, they can last up to a month, and during hibernation, they can go without sustenance for up to 6 months.

So, considering the aforementioned first, let me add another fascinating fact: even with no food or water supplies for a fortnight and a well-moisturised [ant habitat](#), the black garden ant colony will survive during the summer! This remarkable ability is just one aspect of their intriguing ant behaviour. Another fact is that the entire colony can live up to 3 months on sugar water supplies only.

**Why are we mentioning this fact? Well, we presume that you love going on a two-week summer holiday in August, right?**

**Please do not disturb the queen ant too often. Peeping once a week is more than enough. If you follow this advice, you will enjoy watching your colony grow in just about one year.**

On the opposite, if you disturb your [queen ant](#), if you put her under stress lifting your setup lid a few times a day to check if everything is going well or if you put your ant setup near your TV or stereo so all that vibration will hit into the nest area etc., all that will lead to a tragic end of your first ant experience. Why is that?

Imagine living quietly in your house, in a dark room because the light makes you scared, and suddenly a giant lifts up the roof above your

head a few times every single day and on top of all, a bright light blinds you at the same time. Apart from this, the nasty giant screams and makes strange noises now and then, sometimes so loud that the whole house shakes, for the ants, it is the same as an earthquake affecting a person's house. How long are you going to last? I will leave the answer to you.

It would be best if you left your little friends alone. Check them once a week for a minute or two in the evening when the light from the night lamp is soft and as gentle as possible.

### **Troubleshooting Common Issues**

1. Slow colony growth: Ensure proper nutrition, stable temperature, and humidity levels. Reduce stress by minimising disturbances.
2. Queen not laying eggs: Provide protein-rich foods and maintain a warm and calm, dark nesting area.
3. Optimal food choices: Offer a varied diet including small insects like baby crickets, locusts, or mealworms, and ant honey.

You can now skip the mess and save money spent on live food and sugar snaps. Our Protein jelly and Cricket mash combine the best of both, proteins and carbs. Made from high-quality protein sources and vital vitamins and minerals, Best Ants UK jelly provides essential nutrients to keep your [unique ants](#) healthy and active.

The jelly and the cricket mash are easy to digest and provide a long-lasting source of energy. With a sweet and fine chocolate taste, your ants will love this delicious treat. [Order now](#) and give your ant colony the nutrition boost they needs.

How to feed your ants Protein Jelly? [Video instructions click here](#)

### **Conclusion**

After more than two decades in the ant-keeping business, we can confidently say that patience is the most crucial factor for success. By following these guidelines for Lasius Niger [ant colony care](#), you'll be well on your way to experiencing the wonders of these fascinating creatures in your own home.

Remember, whether you're dealing with large black ants UK or smaller varieties, each colony is unique and may require slight adjustments to care. Enjoy your [ant-keeping hobby](#) and the opportunity to observe these incredible insects up close!

If you want to catch your first queen ant yourselves, find out more about the nuptial flight ([flying ants day in the UK](#)).

**Apart from the Lasius N ants, we recommend the Messor Barbarus for your first pet ants.**

**Find out more in our new blog post: [Messor barbarus vs Lasius niger: Which Makes the Best Ant Farm for Beginners? \[2025\]](#)**

## **FAQs**

### **Why is my Lasius niger colony not growing?**

Slow colony growth can be due to insufficient food, incorrect temperature or humidity levels, but mostly stress. Ensure you provide a [varied diet](#) and maintain a stable environment with humidity around 75% and temperatures between 20 °C (overnight) and 25°C (daily).

### **Why is my Lasius niger queen not laying eggs?**

Queens may pause egg-laying due to stress, seasonal changes, or insufficient nutrition. Provide protein-rich foods and maintain a calm, dark nesting area to encourage egg production.

### **What is the best food for Lasius niger?**

Offer a varied diet of protein (insects) and carbohydrates (sugar water). Small insects like baby crickets, locusts or mealworms, and Ant honey are excellent choices.

### **What is the ideal nest for Lasius niger?**

A test tube setup or small formicarium with proper humidity is ideal. Ensure the nest has dark areas for the queen and brood, and a separate foraging area for workers.

### **How often should I feed Lasius niger?**

Feed small amounts every 2-3 days, adjusting based on colony size. Remove uneaten food to prevent mould appearance. Always provide fresh water. Change water once a month or if changes colour (looks contaminated).

### **What temperature is optimal for Lasius niger?**

Maintain temperatures between 20-25°C (68-77°F) for optimal colony health and growth. Avoid extreme temperature fluctuations.

### **What humidity is optimal for Lasius niger?**

Maintain air humidity between 75% and 85% for optimal colony health and growth.

### **Where do black ants live?**

The black garden ant is prevalent in various environments, such as gardens, where nests are established beneath paving stones, within soil, and among brickwork. In hot and humid summer conditions, winged adults emerge and swarm in significant numbers. These '[flying ants](#)' engage in mating and subsequently disperse to establish new colonies.

### **What do black garden ants eat?**

In the wild, black ants are the ultimate buffet enthusiasts, munching on a smorgasbord of live and dead critters like tiny insects, fly and beetle larvae, and even spiders. But they don't stop there—they've also got a sweet tooth for plant goodies like nectar, honeydew, and teeny seeds, not to mention sugary delights like fruit juice, sodas, crumbs, and any tasty morsels you dared to leave unattended on your garden table. Black Ants are energetic farmers of aphids, skillfully guarding them from predators, gathering their sweet honeydew, and eagerly transporting them to start new herds!

### **Are black ants harmful in the UK?**

Although finding numerous black ants in your home can be bothersome, they do not transmit diseases. However, since ants may have travelled through unsanitary areas before entering your home, they can contaminate food and make it unfit for consumption.

### **What do black ants mean in the house?**

If you spot a parade of black ants marching through your home, get ready to dive into a pool of cash! These little critters are like tiny, six-legged fortune-tellers predicting a big boost in your bank account.

### **What are the signs of a black ant infestation?**

1. Ants have a sweet tooth and will locate sugary foods, creating a chemical trail for others to follow. An infestation leads to ants marching in an orderly line towards the food.
2. You may find ants in your food, particularly in unprotected items like fruit, cake, and sugar.

3. Small mounds of dirt near walls, on lawns, and in flowerpots indicate that ants have disturbed the soil while constructing their nests.
4. Annually, during the summer months, it is possible to observe swarms of ants engaging in mating activities while airborne.