



Madagascar Hissing Cockroach

(Scientific Name: *Gromphadorhina portentosa*)



Introduction:

Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches are large, wingless, live-bearing cockroaches. They're relatively common and inexpensive (\$2.00-\$5.00). Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches have a tough exoskeleton for protection, and they do not possess wings like many other cockroach species. They can also produce a loud hissing sound to scare away predators. Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches generally live 2-3 years as adults, but some adults can live for up to 5 years. Overall, the Madagascar Hissing Cockroach makes an amazing, exotic and easy-to-care-for insect pet.

Size:

2-3 inches

Feeding:

Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches are easy to feed. Both babies and adults eat grains (cornflakes, oatmeal), vegetables (romaine lettuce, carrots) and fruits (apples, bananas).

Housing:

Nymphs (baby cockroaches) can live in a small, clear plastic container with air holes. Adults can live in a 2½ -15-gallon tank, depending on the number of cockroaches. Cockroaches will do fine living with other individuals of the same species.

Substrate:

Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches do best with an inch or two of peat moss or vermiculite in their housing.

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Landscaping:

Since cockroaches are fairly shy, it is best to provide them with good hiding spaces. They particularly like large pieces of bark or cork that they can slip under.

Heating:

Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches do best when the temperature is between 75 and 90°F. Hissing Cockroaches are more likely to reproduce if their environment is on the warm side.

Water/Humidity:

Humidity requirements are fairly simple, the Madagascar Hissing Cockroach isn't too fussy about humidity levels, but it should be on the lower (drier) side rather than being overly damp. A simple light spray with a hand sprayer over the substrate once a day with clean, fresh water will be quite adequate, although an additional box filled with damp moss would be appreciated. In addition, a small dish of water should be provided for your cockroaches.

Myths vs. Facts

- ❖ **Myth:** Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches can fly.
- ❖ **Fact:** While many species of cockroach can fly, Madagascan Hissing Cockroaches cannot fly because they don't have wings.

- ❖ **Myth:** Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches lay eggs.
- ❖ **Fact:** Hissing Cockroaches actually carry their egg cases inside their bodies while the nymphs mature. When the nymphs are developed enough they are "born."

- ❖ **Myth:** The hissing comes from their mouths.
- ❖ **Fact:** The hissing sound is a result of air being forced through breathing holes in the sides of the insect when it's disturbed. These holes are called spiracles and act in a similar way to a whistle.

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