

## Live Feeder Delivery Guarantee Policy

Big Apple Herpetological, Inc. always guarantees live delivery when the following conditions are met:

- When you have received the shipment directly from the shipper and have not allowed the shipment to stay outdoors (i.e. on your porch)
- That you accept each order as you cannot always determine their condition by outside appearance
- That you understand that roaches go into hibernation at below 55 degrees and you allow cold weather shipments three hours to warm up at room temperature before passing judgment on their condition

If there is a problem with your order after allowing proper warm up time or there is damage with shortages then we **MUST** be notified (call or e-mail) by the next business day for replacements to be made.

## Roach Care

### *HOUSING*

Aquariums or Big Apple Acrylic Cages in the range of 10 to 20 gallons are normally sufficient in size to keep most roach colonies. However, if you have a large number of roaches you should increase the size of the aquarium. Cardboard or black paper should cover the four sides (or at least the back and sides) unless the roaches are kept in a dark room. You should incorporate a screen top since small nymphs might climb the silicone in the corners of the aquarium. Additionally, some species can climb and while unusual it has been observed that some winged species can flutter their wings and jump.

### *HOUSING OPTION 2*

Another adequate enclosure would be a modified plastic Rubbermaid bin or a 5-gallon bucket. This is accomplished by cutting out part of the plastic lid and attaching screening. While this is definitely a less expensive option, it generally requires a bit of ingenuity.

### *SUBSTRATE*

There is a wide variance of what you can use for substrate, these include; cypress mulch, sphagnum moss, coconut bark, repti-bark, aspen, forest floor, lizard litter, soil or just egg cartons. All of these are available under the substrates section of our website. However, you will make your cage cleanups much easier if you use substrate sparingly. The bottom line is the simpler you keep the setup the less cleaning and maintenance you will need to perform.

***SPECIFIC SPECIES SUGGESTIONS***

*Blaptica dubia*, *Blaberus discoidalis* and most small winged species can be kept with no substrate and a fill of ½ to ¾ of the aquarium with vertically stacked egg crates. *Blaberus crainfer*, *giganteus*, *fusca* and other larger winged species that prefer a little humidity you can use sphagnum moss in the bottom (usually ½”) with stacked pieces of bark (or something similar) for hiding. We want to continue to stress how important it is to provide numerous hiding places. Hiding places can be egg crates, paper towel rolls, bark, logs, etc or you can even get fancy if you want the cage to look nice but ultimately you want your roaches to feel secure.

***CLEANING***

Take the egg crates (with the roaches) out of your main roach container and place them in a separate container that will allow you to sift through the substrate and get rid of anything that “needs to be disposed of”. Cleaning like this should be done every two to three months depending on the size of the colony and how dirty the cage gets. Cleaning a small cage only takes a few minutes and will keep your roaches healthy.

***TEMPERATURE & HEATING***

Generally, cage temperatures housing roaches can range from 75F-100F. However, for optimum breeding, growth and health the recommended temperature is 80F-95F. As with reptiles, your roaches should be provided with a warm and cool side so that they can choose their temperature. If left in standard room temperature of 70F you will have slow growth and breeding. Going a bit warmer into the mid 70’s and upper 70’s will moderately increase your growth and breeding.

However, by using heat tape (Flex-Watt), heat rope or a Dragon’s Lair Heat Mat (all available in our Heating section) you can maximize the potential growth and breeding of your roach colony. Any of the above heating products can be used on approximately half of the bottom of the container, which will provide adequate heat but also allow your roaches to choose between the hot and cool side. Furthermore, they can also climb up on the egg cartoons if they prefer to be cooler.

***WARNING: Allowing tropical species to drop below 70F for anything longer than 24 hours is putting out the welcome mat for trouble. This is why these species are not considered pests. If they do not have the proper care they typically cannot live long. Southern Florida and Arizona MAY be the exception, but they still need water and food.***

***BEHAVIOR***

The nature of the roach is to stay hidden. This is why they are most comfortable in dark containers with lots of egg crates. While often they do very little, the rest of the time they are eating, drinking or breeding. Breeding occurs when you see their rear ends attached to each other. You will also occasionally see the females extend their egg sack (ootheca) out and rotate them. Try not to disturb your roaches, the results will be more breeding successes.

## ***FEEDING***

You could feed your roaches just about anything and they will probably eat it, but what they eat is what you're feeding your reptiles. Therefore a good mixed diet of dog food, oats, bran, chicken scratch, fruits and veggies is ideal. Anything from oranges to carrots is great but almost anything that is good for you to eat in your fridge will work as food for roaches. Try not to leave food standing too long as you do not want mold, etc. Another possible combination is to feed your roaches a combination of Cricket Total Bites and Box Turtle Bites (both available in our feeding section). This would take care of both their food and water needs in one easy to use prepared commercial food. However, you can still provide some of the food items listed above in addition to the "bites" foods.

## ***WATER***

You could provide a bowl of water for your roaches but nymphs often have a hard time accessing it and they can easily drown in such a setup. It is recommended that you mist your roaches every other day. It is not essential to mist but they do seem to enjoy it and they will all come out when you do spray. The other water sources will be the Cricket Total Bites and Box Turtle Bites mentioned above as well as the fresh fruits and veggies you are giving them.

## ***MISCELLANEOUS***

Roaches that are cared for properly are very easy to maintain and breed. Most of the species have 15-30 babies (i.e. Nymphs) that start out at about 1/8" and depending on the species can get to 1.5" to 4". Achieving adulthood takes an average of 3-6 months depending on the species, care, temperature, etc. In general, Roaches can live from one to four years.