



OVERVIEW

Dorymyrmex — the Pyramid Ants — are small, lightning-fast ants found across the southern United States and into Mexico. Named for the cone-shaped mound they build over their nest entrance, these ants are in constant motion and among the most entertaining to keep in the hobby.

AntGear carries two species: the solid black Crazy Pyramid Ant and the striking red-and-black Bicolored Pyramid Ant. This care guide is built on firsthand experience keeping both. Note that Dorymyrmex is a large genus — care requirements can vary significantly across species. This guide covers only the species available through AntGear.

DIFFICULTY

BEGINNER

Hardy and fast-growing. Straightforward to keep as long as the enclosure is secure and food is offered consistently.

TEMPERAMENT

High-energy foragers that mob food quickly and defend their nest against competing ants. Not aggressive toward keepers — workers are focused on foraging, not confrontation. No functional sting; bite is harmless. Defined by their speed: fast, darting movement that looks chaotic but is always purposeful.

FEEDING

Protein (primary): 2–3× per week. Fruit flies for young colonies; mealworm pieces, roach bits, or crickets as the colony grows. Always pre-kill prey — a live cricket's kick can injure or kill workers.

Liquid sugars (constant): Sunburst Ant Nectar, sugar water, or diluted honey — keep available at all times via a liquid feeder.

Remove uneaten protein within 24 hours.

ANT FARM

Start in a test tube setup. When the first workers begin to forage, attach a mini outworld with Fluon applied to the inner rim. Once established, transition to a formicarium with good visibility — watching Dorymyrmex build their cone-shaped mound and forage is one of the highlights of this genus. Bamboo Tube Nests work well. Keep the outworld dry. Apply Fluon to the outworld rim; their speed, not climbing ability, is the escape risk.

RECOMMENDED SUPPLIES

- Heat Cable
- Sunburst Ant Nectar
- AntVac
- Bamboo Tube Nest
- Liquid Feeder
- Fluon



Photo by Jake Nitta

TEMPERATURE

80–90°F (27–32°C). Use a heat cable on one side to create a gradient — workers self-regulate by moving between zones. Warmer temperatures within this range produce faster brood development. An optional mild cool-down in winter supports long-term colony health but is not required.

HUMIDITY

Low to moderate — around 40–50% in the nest. Maintain a small moist area for brood while keeping the rest of the nest and outworld dry. Fresh water must be available at all times via a secured source. Excess moisture promotes mold and is inconsistent with their natural habitat.

GROWTH

Queens are fully claustral during founding. Egg to adult worker takes 4–6 weeks in warm conditions — among the faster timelines in the hobby. Colonies are monogynous and grow steadily into the hundreds, with established colonies reaching several thousand workers.

COMMON CHALLENGES

Problem	Likely Cause	Fix
Worker injuries	Live cricket in enclosure	Always pre-kill prey; remove cricket hind legs
Escapes	Gap in lid or tubing	Inspect all seams; apply Fluon monthly
Protein mold	Prey left too long	Remove uneaten protein within 24 hours
Drowning	Open water source	Use a secured water tube or reservoir
Slow growth	Temperature too low	Raise heat toward 88°F
Overcrowding	Nest too small	Upgrade proactively; Dorymyrmex grow fast