



## Caresheet for your *Oecophylla smaragdina* True weaver ants!

Name: *Oecophylla smaragdina*  
Distribution: Australia and Asia  
Colonyform: Polygyne  
Queen: 20-22mm  
Workers: 8-12 mm  
Nestform: silk-nests in the Canopy of their Hostplant  
Nutrition: Honey water and insects  
Temperature: arena 21°C - 30°C nest part: 24°C - 28°C  
Humidity: nest part 70% - 90%, arena: 50-70%  
Hibernation: No



### Arrival of your ants:

Once your colony arrives check if the queen is alive and healthy, we will ensure the Queen for live arrival guaranteed. The colony will come in wet tissue around the test tube as well as a layer of tin foil this is to keep the colony cool during the hot summer this method of insulation could change. The colony might be stressed due to transit I advise keeping them in this set up to let them settle. Also feed them a drop of honey water 3 days after arrival keep them at a healthy 24°C - 28°C and keep them in the dark for now with the use of the foil. I also recommend keeping the tube in the box they came in or similar. Keep them in an area with little to no vibrations and stress results in queen deaths feed them once every 4-6 days and only check on them for a 1 or 2 minutes.

**General observation:**

Oecophylla smaragdina are not the easiest species to look after however from experience so far, they are fairly stress resistant for such an exotic species they will be used to wind blowing in the canopy and shaking the trees. They have amazing grip and claw like hairs at the end of their feet which makes them have amazing grip and good escape prevention is needed for this species.

A good sign of colony health and stress levels would be fresh eggs keep an eye on these they should be laid within 1-2 weeks of settling in the test tube.

Oecophylla smaragdina tend to be fairly aggressive and can spray formic acid and bite this is more of an issue for established colonies.

**Diet:**

Honey water is very important for this species a dish of honey water or feeder dish/ tube should be filled with honey water for them and changed every 2-4 days once in a set up. In the wild this species farms insects for plant syrup. They also eat small insects such as grubs and roaches for smaller colonies say 1-30 workers boil the insects first in hot water then cool them under cold water and dry them with a tissue, then cut them into small pieces and place in the farm or test tube. Boiling insures low risk of parasites and mites. If you want to feed them any live food, I recommend wax worms.

**Hunting:**

They have an interesting strategy for prey where they take down pray by working as a team and grabbing it from all sides and walking it up to the nest, it is an amazing sight to watch.

Set ups are the most important aspect of this species. Since they are weaver ants, they use the brood to spin silk and work together to pull leaves together to create a nest the picture below shows this very well!



**Type 1:**

This will be an acrylic or glass tank the centrepiece tends to be a citrus tree. Usually: *Citrus mitis*, *Pachira aquatic*, or another citrus based plant. The plant used should be in a plant pot which is a decent size for the tree to grow and the set up should be checked to meet the humidity levels required for the species as well as temperature. Ventilation is also key since plants take in oxygen at night which could lead to ant death so make sure the tank the plant is in is well ventilated enough to keep high humidity but at the same time enough to keep the ants oxygenated. The plants survival is key to the ant's survival water and care for the plant as well as the ants and follows recommended guidelines for the species of plant you are using. An example of a tank set up link is below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJZXL1FmW9g>

Ants Canada

His set up is small scale would work for a small colony.

But my I would advise having one plant as a centrepiece to the colony.



This set up was done by *Veektor R* and is a good example.

To maintain humidity the nest should be misted daily with a spray bottle. You can also build a feeding station attached to the plant or nearby where you can place all foodstuffs. Heating should be room temp and may need a heat matt during winter time or if temperatures fall below 21 Degrees Celsius use a top quality heat matt and thermostat and measure both temperature and humidity inside the tank.

**Type 2:** This is an interesting set up more of a DIY however it doesn't utilise a plant and can be a bit much I would recommend Type 1 however watch the video and decide for yourself:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=2&v=6IZXO2\\_wRmc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&v=6IZXO2_wRmc)

## **FAQ: Frequently asked questions**

### **1) When to transfer them?**

Potentially when they have 5-10 workers you should consider placing them into a test tube out world set up. If you feel they have a decent amount of brood and say 10 plus workers you should consider placing the test tube or ants into their set up.

### **2) Why are they not eating?**

Have you tried offering different food and depending on colony size they will eat different things and in different quantities as well as brood development and the quantity of brood?

### **3) Why are my ants eating brood?**

Stress is the answer do you have them in an area with high vibrations and disturbance? Are you checking on them too often and for too long? Stop doing this or you can cause the queen to die. The least amount of stress insures colony survival.

**Thank you for reading the care sheet!**

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