

Giant African Millipede

Care Sheet



The amazing Giant African millipede hails from the lush subtropical forests and rainforests of West Africa! These fascinating creatures have some incredible survival skills, like curling up into a protective ball and releasing a special liquid to keep predators at bay. To ensure they thrive, it's essential to mimic their natural habitat with a consistent diet and environment. And the best part? Millipedes can happily coexist, and you can mix species as long as there's plenty of room for everyone! Let's create a wonderful home for these captivating critters!

Temperature

Giant African Millipedes thrive in warm environments, so it's crucial to create a cosy habitat for them to flourish! If your home maintains a comfortable room temperature, that's often perfect for your millipedes. However, if it tends to be a bit chilly, consider using a heat mat connected to a thermostat to keep things just right. This will help you avoid overheating or drying out your little friends. Position the heat mat at one end of their enclosure, allowing your millipede to enjoy a warm side and a cooler side, and let them choose their perfect spot. With a bit of attention, your millipedes will be happy and healthy!

Get to know

Building a relationship with your Giant millipede is a wonderful experience that can deepen your bond with this fascinating creature. It's essential to create a calm and safe atmosphere, as you'll be their source of comfort and protection. Unlike their more aggressive cousins, the centipedes, Giant millipedes are gentle souls. If your millipede feels scared, you might notice it curling up into a ball. In such moments, allow it the space to uncurl on its own; forcing it may cause harm.

When you first welcome a millipede into your home, provide time for it to acclimate to its new surroundings. Take the time to gradually introduce yourself, allowing both of you to become familiar with one another. Instead of reaching directly for your millipede, extend your hand gently so it can sense that you pose no threat.

Enclosure

Housing a Giant African millipede can be a rewarding experience! It's essential to choose a well-ventilated terrarium to keep bacteria at bay and ensure a healthy oxygen flow. Make sure to secure the doors to prevent any adventurous escapes—using specialised locks can enhance your enclosure's security!

Getting the right size is also key to your millipede's comfort. For a single adult, aim for a minimum space of 30cm x 30cm x 30cm. If you plan to house more than one, be prepared to provide even more room. Your millipede will thrive in a thoughtfully designed home!

LIFESPAN

7 to 10 years
in captivity

SIZE

30cm

TEMPERATURE

Hot end: 23 °C - 28 °C

Cold end: 20 °C - 22 °C

HUMIDITY

70% - 80%

Environment

Substrate: To create the best home for your millipede, choose a substrate that closely resembles their natural habitat. Coco fibre is ideal! It retains moisture and humidity, keeping your millipede happy and thriving. Make sure the substrate depth is 10 to 15 cm, as millipedes enjoy burrowing. For an extra boost of humidity, consider adding sphagnum moss mixed with the substrate. Your millipede will truly appreciate the effort you put into their environment!

Décor: Creating a beautiful décor in your vivarium is truly essential for your Millipede's happiness! To help them feel safe and cozy, ensure there are plenty of hiding spots and artificial plants for them to nestle in. Don't forget to sprinkle some leaf litter throughout the enclosure—this not only gives your millipede a perfect retreat but also serves as a nutritious snack. Your thoughtful care will make all the difference in their well-being and thriving!

Cleaning: Maintaining a clean terrarium is essential for a healthy environment! Regular spot cleaning is key—tend to waste and old food as you see it. Plus, don't forget that deep clean once a month with a reptile-safe disinfectant and a fresh substrate. Your pets will thrive in a sparkling home!

Diet

Feeding: Giant African Millipedes are fascinating detritivores that thrive on decaying plants and enjoy fresh food, too! To keep them happy and healthy, offer a variety of food once a week, making sure to change it daily to avoid bacteria. Instead of sprinkling supplements, provide a cuttlefish bone for those essential nutrients. Remember, they love a diverse menu, so be generous with different options; these little creatures can be pretty particular about their meals!

Water: It's essential to provide your millipede with fresh water every day, placing it at the cool end of their habitat. A shallow bowl works best, keeping it just deep enough to avoid any risk of drowning. Additionally, misting the enclosure helps them stay hydrated.



Millipede secretion stain

Giant Millipede secretion

If you're lucky enough to handle a giant millipede, it might release a little secretion if it's feeling scared. No need to worry, it's totally harmless! You might notice a red or brown stain on your skin, and it may itch a bit, but a quick hand wash will help. Remember, the stain will fade with time and the itching should go very quickly. Once your millipede is more comfortable it won't happen anymore.

Health & Welfare

A sturdy, rigid body characterises a vibrant millipede, and it actively investigates its surroundings while enjoying regular meals. If you notice a soft body, sluggishness, poor appetite, or unexpected colours and behaviours like curling up when touched, it may be unwell.

Remember, when a millipede is moulting, it may burrow and seem inactive; this is entirely normal!



Moulting

The Giant African Millipede undergoes a fascinating process of moulting, which is an exciting sign of their growth! You'll observe that younger millipedes shed their exoskeletons more frequently, and this gradually slows as they approach their full size. This moulting process can take several days or even weeks, so it's essential to give them some space during this vulnerable time. You can often tell when a millipede is preparing to moult because its colour may lighten, and its movements will slow down, sometimes even appearing as though its legs are limp. It's easy to mistake them for being inactive or even dead, but it's best to wait a few days before attempting to handle them to avoid disturbing the moulting process. Interestingly, you might not find their exoskeleton after they've moulted, as they often consume it for the valuable nutrients it provides. Observing this process can deepen your appreciation for these fantastic creatures!

Diseases and Concerns

Giant African Millipedes are truly fascinating creatures, but they do require special care to thrive! One common concern is Foot Rot, a bacterial infection that can cause blackened legs and, if not addressed, lead to serious consequences. This condition often arises from poor hygiene, so maintaining a clean environment is crucial for their health. Fungal infections can also pose a risk, particularly for stressed millipedes or those kept in dry conditions. Thankfully, with the proper care and attention, healthy millipedes can usually avoid these issues. Additionally, it's essential to be aware of harmful mites. White mites can thrive in overly moist conditions, potentially harming your millipedes by competing for food.

If you're considering bringing these amazing creatures into your home, take the time to do your research! And remember, if you need guidance, don't hesitate to reach out to an invertebrate specialist. They can provide valuable advice to ensure your millipede friends stay happy and healthy!

Transport

When taking your animals out with you, you must ensure their travel box is safe for them. Ensure there is enough room for your Millipede to sit comfortably, but not so much that they can be knocked around. If they are new to travel, try covering their travel box with a cloth to create a dark space that helps calm them. Make sure it is well ventilated, but make sure there's no escape. Heat is vital; bring a battery heat pack or a hot water bottle to help provide heat so they stay comfortable.



**Giant African
Millipede**