

African Giant Millipede

(Archispirostreptus gigas)

African Giant Black Millipedes are beautiful, extremely docile, moisture-loving giants that make the perfect pet arthropod! These millipedes have the ability to curl themselves up into a ball if disturbed, and can secrete a defensive liquid that could be dangerous if put into the eyes or mouth. Make sure to wash your hands if exposed to the liquid. To find the number of legs on your millipede, count the body segments, multiply by 4, and subtract 10. Of course, many millipedes have missing legs, so the number will be general. African Giant Black Millipedes are some of the largest millipedes in the world, if not the largest. They can grow to be as thick around as your thumb. Many times these millipedes are found in pet shops where they are full of mites. A few mites on your millipede is generally harmless, but if there is a huge number of mites living on your millipede, it is suggested to get the mites off. To do this, take a cotton ball, dip it in rubbing alcohol or petroleum jelly, and wipe it over the mites. Rubbing alcohol and petroleum jelly does not seem to harm the millipede, as long as it does not penetrate the millipedes' breathing pores, on the side of their body. African Giant Black Millipedes should be the first millipede considered if you are a newcomer to the hobby.

Range:

Tropical and sub-tropical western Africa.

Type:

Terrestrial, but will burrow to some extent.

Diet:

Babies and adults eat bananas, tomatoes, melons, romaine lettuce, apples, cucumbers, and other fruits and vegetables. Millipedes should have a supply of calcium added to their diet, like calcium powder, which can be purchased from most pet stores.

Full Grown Size:

7.5 to 11 inches.

Growth:

Slow speed.

Temperature:

75 to 85° F.

Humidity:

75 to 80%.

Temperament:

Docile and calm.

Housing:

Babies can live in a roomy clear plastic container with air holes. Adults can live in a 5 to 10-gallon tank, depending on the size of the millipede. Millipedes can live communally. The tank should be twice as long, and at least as wide as the individual, or the largest millipede in the tank. Floor space is more important than height.

Substrate:

3 to 4 inches of peat moss and potting soil, kept moist.

Decor:

No decorations are really needed.

Other Names:

Giant Millipede, African Black Millipede, and Tanzanian Giant Black Millipede.

**Please note that ALL millipedes can secrete a liquid that can be dangerous to some people. Although most people are not affected by this species, some people may be allergic to the liquid, or just more sensitive, making it a dangerous situation, especially if put into the eyes or mouth. Affects of millipedes' natural defences may vary between people. All millipedes can secrete this liquid, so be careful, because you don't want to find out if you are allergic or more sensitive the HARD WAY!*