

Madagascan Fire Millipedes

(*Aphistogoniulus corralipes*)

General & Housing

The housing can be any suitable small aquarium or container that can take a 15 cm depth of leaf mould (either beech or oak) substrate, mixed into this should be a quantity of soft dead wood (approximately 10%). The substrate should be kept damp but not wet; pieces of bark placed on the surface of the leaf mould act as mulch and help prevent the substrate from drying out too quickly. Most species are easy to keep and breed.

The BIG SECRET of keeping and breeding millipedes is.....DON'T DISTURB THEM. Now this means that if they vanish out of sight for a few days which is what they tend to do, don't dig them up to check on them. Millipedes are naturally subterranean and so spend some time out of sight. Also some species build soil chambers both to lay eggs and to moult their skins and each time you dig them up you destroy the chambers and so prevent breeding and prevent moulting which can be very harmful as some species require some weeks to rest in the chamber both before the moult and after as the new skin hardens.

Diet

Millipedes feed on soft fruits and vegetables and show a great fondness for cucumber it's always best to offer a mixture of foods, dusted with extra calcium; this simply means scraping some cuttlefish over your food stuffs. Also remove the food before it moulds usually the next day but do leave it in through at least one night.

**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. Effects of millipede's 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!*