



### Giant Black Millipede

Giant Black Millipedes are very easy to look after; in fact, most of the time they look after themselves! They live in the soil found under logs, rocks and leaf litter, and they feed on rotting wood and leaf debris. They are very important in terms of helping to break down dead plant material in the rainforest.

#### Food

This species likes to feed on rotting wood, decaying leaf litter and lichen covered branches. They will also feed on small amounts of freshly cut vegetables such as carrot, potato or sweet potato. This should be partially buried in the substrate. Other vegetable scraps can be added from time to time. Add more as it is eaten.

Calcium in the diet seems to be an important factor in raising these millipedes. You can purchase calcium supplements from Coburg Aquarium.

#### Water

Ensure the substrate remains moist, but not sodden. The millipedes will get their moisture from the damp soil and their food.

#### Enclosure

The enclosure needs to be about 10 cm H x 15 cm W x 20 cm L. Place the enclosure in a position away from direct sunlight. The base of the enclosure should be covered in

a substrate of coco-peat (available from Coburg Aquarium) to a depth of around 5cm. The substrate always needs to be kept damp. Place a shelter in the enclosure for the millipedes to hide under. Covering the top of the substrate with leaf litter will create more shelter for the millipedes, as well as provide additional food.

#### Temperature/humidity

Safe temperature zone is 15 – 24°C. They will cope well in cooler conditions but may suffer heat stress if kept above 28°C for extended periods. Humidity 60 – 90% (which is easily maintained by keeping the substrate moist).

#### Life span

Around 2-5 years

#### Handling

These millipedes cannot bite and can be handled safely. They should be picked up gently by their bodies, and carefully placed on the hand. They may release a yellow/brown liquid if they feel threatened. This is not harmful, but can smell a little and will stain the skin for a few days. Always wash your hands after handling these animals.

#### Common Issues

Stress by over-handling may occur if handled more than once a day. Limit the handling to a period of 10-15 minutes daily.