

Madagascar Hissing Cockroach

Scientific Name: *Gromphadorhina madagascarensis*

Class: Insecta

Order: Blattodea

Family: Blaberidae



Body Length is up to 3 inches. Coloration is dark brown, and the body is segmented. This species has special breathing pores along the sides of its body. This hissing sound is caused by air being expelled through these pores, and can be heard up to 12 feet away. The hissing sound is produced by males courting or battling for territory, and also gently by a female becoming receptive to a mate. The Madagascan cockroaches are so fastidious that they seem unlikely to ever invade human quarters. Entomologists keep them as pets, wondering if anything could be added to their diet to induce them to grow wings. Well-fed adults have already developed short, blunt horns, which seems unusual for insects so eager to avoid confrontation. They have biting and chewing mouth parts, and teeth in

their gizzard. No cockroach species are parasitic or poisonous. Fossil cockroaches have been found dating back to 280-350 million years ago. They have persisted because of their flexible eating habits, their ability to adapt, their flat body which enables them to hide in narrow places, and the strong muscles in their legs which enable them to run rapidly.

Range

Madagascar

Gestation

Incubation: 55
days

Behavior

Cockroaches are nocturnal insects. They depend primarily on sense organs – antennae for detecting odor, and tibiae, which respond to vibration – to find food and avoid predators. Most cockroaches also have sensitive projections, called cerci, at the posterior end of their bodies, which alert the insect to movement too far behind them to be detected by the antennae. Fossil cockroaches have been found dating back to 280-350 million years ago. They have persisted because of their flexible eating habits, their ability to adapt, their flat body which enables them to hide in narrow places, and the strong muscles in their legs which enable them to run rapidly.

Reproduction

The female secretes a sexual attractant which draws the males and initiates courtship behavior. Using their antennae, the male arouses the female by tactile stimulation. Cockroaches lay their eggs in orderly rows within a hard capsule called the ootheca, which is made by the female. The ootheca resembles a lady's clutch handbag that opens from the top. The young emerge from this opening and follow the mother to food. It takes about six months for the young to mature, and they usually have another 18 months of adult life after that.

Wild Diet

Omnivorous. Will eat nearly anything, including the sick and dead of their own species