

Madagascar
Hissing Cockroach
Gromphadorhina
portentosa



Physical Characteristics

- Large insect that is an elongated oval shape
- Six spiny legs extend from the thorax while the long abdomen extends behind the legs.
- Unlike other cockroaches, they do not have wings.
- Their exoskeleton is like armored plates with large black plating covering their head. This plate has two protruding horns on the males and two subtle bumps on females.
- In addition to the plate covering the head, the thorax has two plates and the abdomen has 8 sectioned plates.

Size

- Length: 2-4 inches

Lifespan

- Wild: Up to 5 years
- Zoos: 2-5 years

Behaviors

- Terrestrial
- They will make a hissing sound to ward of predators, during fights, and during mating.
- Their hissing sound comes from the forcing of air through modified spiracles (small port holes found down the sides of the cockroach).
- When competing for a mate, males will use their rounded horns to ram other males and push each other around. The larger male tends to win the fight.

Diet

- Wild: fallen fruit, leaves, decaying wood, plants and animals
- Zoo: various fruits and vegetables
- As decomposers (detritivores), cockroaches eat decaying organic material (from plants and animals) and help reduce litter that would otherwise build up.

Reproduction

- Cockroaches are **ovoviviparous**, which means they give birth to live young that have hatched internally from eggs.
- Females will carry the oothecal (egg case) internally for 60 days and then release the young after they have hatched.
- They are fully mature at 9 months of age.

Habitat and Range

- Habitat: forest floor and in rotting logs
- Range: Island of Madagascar off the southeast coast of Africa

Conservation

- Status: No special status in the wild
- Madagascar is under great risk due to deforestation and destruction of habitat.



Classification

- Kingdom: Animalia
- Phylum: Arthropod
- Class: Insecta
- Order: Blattodea
- Family: Blaberidae
- Genus: *Gromphadorhina*
- Species: *G. portentosa*