

## ROACH CARE SHEET

### **Turkistan Roach Blatta (Shelfordella) lateralis**

#### *General Information*

**Distribution:** Asia, Africa, U.S.

**Adult Size:** Adults range from .75"-1.1".

**Babies:** Babies are around 1/16".

**Sexing:** Males are reddish in color and have wings, while females are black with no wings.

**Active Period:** Nocturnal, most roaches will scamper away when they see light. I recommend a dark container kept in a dark environment.

**Life Span:** Typically this species will live from 12-24 months after reaching adulthood, but males will die earlier than females.

**Speed:** Blatta lateralis are a fast speed roach. Overseas these roaches are referred to as red runners.

#### *Housing*

**Cage:** My general care sheet talks about different types of cages. I prefer a dark Rubbermaid container with a vented lid.

**Substrate:** I prefer to use sphagnum moss, coconut fiber a.k.a. bed-a-beast, or soil, mixed with 50% sand (1/2" or so) in my lateralis containers.

**Hiding:** Roaches need places to hide, room to breed, and space to molt. Most people use egg crates, which work well and can be changed out as needed. Some build little roach motels with corkboard that last longer, but cost more.

**Heat:** These roaches can be kept between 80F-95F. For faster growth and breeding the higher temps work better, but always offer a cool and hot side for temperature variance.

**Humidity:** Lateralis require a little more misting than other species. A staple supply of water (see our water crystals under the product section) and fruits/veggies, and misting provide enough moisture for lateralis.

**Cleaning:** All non-climbers are very easy to clean. My standard method is to take the eggs crates and knock all the roaches off into an empty container. With lateralis I will leave all the egg cases to hatch and let the babies grow a little. Then once they are all a decent size you can remove them into a clean container. This species does not get dirty very fast so they need very little cleaning and have no smell.

## ***Food & Water***

**Food:** Fruits & veggies should be given 2-3 times per week. A staple dry food like roach buffet (under are products section) should also be offered 2-3 times per week. Typically I alternate my food every day between dry and wet. I also only give small portions so all is eaten to prevent mold. You will quickly learn how much your roaches will eat.

**Water:** Because these roaches cannot climb they will drown in a water dish. Using sponges is also a bad ideal because they can grow bacteria. I think the best method for moisture is water crystals (look under our product section) with the occasional misting.

## ***Breeding***

**Age:** B. lateralis usually takes 3-5 month to mature into adults. Most roaches will go through seven molts. When you see a white roach it is not “albino”, but a freshly molted one that will regain its color usually within 24 hours. Sometimes you will find a dried exoskeleton, which most people think, is a dead dried up roach, but it’s just the leftovers from the molt.

**Breeding:** Not much to tell here. Just keep them warm, fed, dark, and they are going to breed. B. lateralis females are egg layers and soon you will see them all over the bottom of the cage. It usually takes the egg cases 3-6 weeks to hatch.

## ***Other Notes***

**Production:** B. lateralis are one of the few non-climbers that breed super fast. These roaches can hold their own against any other species out there.

**Meat-to-shell:** Roaches have much higher meat to shell ratio than other feeders. This means it takes less of them to fill up your pets, and they’re getting more out of bugs.

**Wings:** Only male lateralis have wings. Occasionally a male will jump and try to fly. This is very rare, but sometime they can jump 12-24 inches. A simple vented lid on their container will prevent one from ever getting out.

**Climbing:** This species cannot climb smooth surfaces, which makes them very easy to contain. It is so easy to go in and grab a roach compared to crickets, which jump out of everything and end up everywhere.

**Smell:** Blatta lateralis have little to no smell.

***Advantages of roaches over crickets and mealworms!!!***

1. No smelly containers.
2. Very easy to care for and clean.
3. Easy to breed and use as feeders.
4. Don't make any noise.
5. Don't jump.
6. Higher meat to shell ratio.
7. You know the source of your feeders. I've kept them at the highest quality, and so are you. You are not getting the crickets that survived and are poorly fed and malnutrition.
8. **MOST IMPORTANT** – They are a good natural feeder for your pet, and they will go crazy for them.

Email me if you have any questions.  
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