



Birth

These roaches are what we call "ovoviviparous", meaning that their offspring start off in an egg sac (like the yellow "ootheca" that you see in the picture above). Then, the eggs are kept at the right temperature inside the body until they hatch there. The offspring will eventually crawl out of her body as "nymphs" (young roaches).

What is a hissing cockroach?

Madagascar hissing cockroaches come from Madagascar, as their name suggests. They are not a type of roach that will infest your home-- in fact, the majority of cockroach species are not capable of infesting homes.

This hardy roach would rather live in a warm and humid forest with forest matter from the ground to eat. They're large, but they are not the largest species of cockroach (that award goes to *Megaloblotta longipennis* if measured based on length).

They live in colonies where they like being close together. You might find them in reptile stores where they are used as feeder animals, but they are also commonly kept as pets.



GROMPHADORHINA PORTENTOSA

The Madagascar hissing cockroach



ABOVE: this is a male hissing cockroach. You can tell from the protruding horns on what is called a "pronotum" (the armored plate on the back of his head and neck).



HOW DO THEY HISS?

Now for one of their signature features: hissing. They don't make this sound with their mouths, but instead they channel air quickly through their "carapace" (exoskeleton) which produces the sound. Both sexes of roach hiss, but it is seen more frequently in mature males fighting for dominance.



ABOVE: the female hissing cockroach does not have any horns on her pronotum.

DIET AND HABITAT

ABOVE: here is a male hissing cockroach with a slice of yellow squash. In the wild, they like to eat vegetation and other matter found on the ground in forests. When kept in a captive environment, they like most fruits, veggies, and dry pet foods for some added protein. The climate in Madagascar is warm and moist, which is where they thrive. They enjoy clustering on the undersides of bark and generally stay away from light.

