

Introducing New Dormice

To prevent inbreeding the African Pygmy Dormice, it is important to introduce new blood in the colony. The best option would be to introduce young Dormice, but be sure you can identify the gender or you may want to introduce adults to avoid issues later on. This is done on neutral territory.

Things to help the introduction include:

Try rubbing a menthol vapor on the Dormice and the newly cleaned enclosure - paying particular attention to the genital region to help disguise scent and reduce the fighting instinct.

Dilute in a spray bottle and spritz a strong scented essential oil such as lavender, vanilla or lemon scent around the enclosure.

Change all bedding and clean all nests and alter the layout for them.

Make sure you have plenty of food and initially set up multiple feeding stations and numerous nests and hides.

A deep layer of bedding can be a good way of diffusing fighting.

Distracting food treats things like live crickets or millet sprays.

Your new Dormice may nest alone for a few nights, but this is normal. In my past experiences It has been found that it can be difficult to integrate established family groups. It has been found that the young and adolescents may be readily accepted, but not the adults.

Sometimes Dormice personalities simply do not match up. I've had females that would not accept any other females, other than her own daughters; in the past.

Always make sure you have a spare and secure enclosure, so you are prepared for Dormouse territorial disputes.

I could not emphasize enough the importance of having spare enclosures!

Keep a close eye on your colony, so that you are aware if you need to separate your Dormice. The danger signs are quite obvious, especially with males where there is excessive chasing, fighting and one Dormouse may be pinned with the other holding it down.

TAKE ALL PRECAUTIONS!