

# Alfie



- Species:** Cave Cockroach (*Blaberus giganteus*)
- Habitat:** West Indies and parts of South America—I like to live in damp, dark places—especially caves.
- How we look after our pet:** A tank with a heat mat underneath to keep them warm enough, lots of soil to bury themselves under, and places to hide. Sprayed with water every day.
- Food:** Lots of different vegetables, fruit etc, but my favourite food is bat poo!
- Characteristics:** Cockroaches are insects! They have 6 sticky legs, 2 long antennae and cave cockroaches have wings. They have no bones, so they have an exoskeleton to protect their body.
- Why we love Alfie:** We love how light and gentle he is when he walks across your hand.

## **Alfie's Story**

We have had Alfie since he was a tiny baby (nymph) and he is now a grown-up. It has taken about a year and a half for him to grow up. Now that he is a grown up, he has wings, but don't worry, he doesn't really fly properly, just uses them to glide if necessary, and this is rare to see.

Many people are wary of cockroaches, having had bad experiences with pest species, or because they have a reputation for being dirty, but Alfie is not dirty. Cockroaches are only dirty if they can get in to dirty places; they do love rotten food, and the cave cockroaches even eat bat poo in the wild. Alfie is very clean. In fact, it is very important for a cockroach to have clean antennae, so they are always cleaning them!