herpy

FROGS

Llanos Frog

Lepidobatrachus llanensis

Lepidobatrachus llanensis is a broad, flattened aquatic frog from the dry Gran Chaco of South America and the closest relative of *Lepidobatrachus laevis*. It lies in wait in shallow water, burrows down and forms a cocoon in the dry season. The species is rare in captivity, and almost nothing is known about its care. It must live alone and bites, so it is an animal to look at, not to handle.

Family: Ceratophryidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**7-10 cm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**5-15 years**
Active	**At dusk and at night**
Lifestyle	**Burrowing and semi-aquatic**
Habitat	**Semi-desert and savanna**
Skin toxins	**None known**
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 30 × 40 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**24-28 °C**
Temperature, night	**20-23 °C**
Humidity	**60-70%**
Water	**Aquaterrarium** depth 5-20 cm
UVB	**Optional** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**Insects, vertebrates and worms/snails**
Kept	**Singly**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Development	**Tadpoles in water**
Egg-laying site	**In water**
Eggs per clutch	**1,400**
Larval period	**14 days** from hatching to metamorphosis
Larval diet	**Other tadpoles**
Parental care	**None**

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Not listed**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Very little is known about the care of *Lepidobatrachus llanensis*, and the species is only rarely kept.
TEMPERATURE	By day the water and air are kept at 24-28 °C and at night at 20-23 °C. Cold water makes the frog a poor feeder and more susceptible to disease, so a thermostat-controlled heater is necessary in most living rooms.
HUMIDITY AND MISTING	Humidity is kept at 60-70 %, and the large water surface manages this almost on its own. Good ventilation is more important than humidity: at least half of the lid must be mesh, because still, humid air causes skin infections.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	The water is the frog's home, and water quality is the most important part of its care. The water is 5-20 cm deep, and the frog must always be able to reach both the surface and land without swimming.
LIGHTING AND UVB	UVB is not necessary. An ordinary fluorescent tube for 12 hours a day gives a clear day-night rhythm. It must be dark at night, because the species is probably most active in the evening and at night.
FEEDING	The species is a predator and takes anything it can overpower. The feeding is borrowed from *L. laevis*: earthworms, crickets, locusts, roaches and waxworms.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Lepidobatrachus llanensis* lives as a loner and must be kept alone: the tadpoles eat each other, and adult frogs of the genus may eat their own kind.
NATIVE RANGE	Argentina, Bolivia and Paraguay.