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FROGS

Baron's Mantella

Mantella baroni

A small, diurnal frog from the eastern forests of Madagascar, black with orange and black tiger stripes on the hind legs and pale green spots at the limbs. *Mantella baroni* grows to about 3 cm, is one of the largest in the genus and feeds on ants and other small arthropods. It is easy to keep when the enclosure is cool, but does not tolerate heat.

Family: Mantellidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**2-3 cm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**5-10 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Rainforest and montane forest**
Skin toxins in the wild	**Mild**
Skin toxins in captivity	**None** Captive-bred animals. Wild-caught animals can keep their toxins for a long time
Difficulty	**Beginner**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Development	**Tadpoles in water**
Egg-laying site	**On the ground**
Sexually mature	**12-18 months**
Eggs per clutch	**50-130**
Hatching	**3-12 days**
Larval period	**42-56 days** from hatching to metamorphosis
Larval diet	**Algae/plants and complete diet**
Parental care	**None**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**45 × 45 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 4 adults
Temperature, day	**21-24 °C**
Temperature, night	**16-18 °C**
Humidity	**60-80%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Optional** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**Small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**In groups**

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	A pair can be kept in a terrarium of about 40 litres. Four adults need an enclosure of at least 45 × 45 × 30 cm, and more animals require more floor area.
TEMPERATURE	*Mantella baroni* thrives at ordinary room temperature, 21-24 °C during the day, and at night the temperature may fall to 16-18 °C.
HUMIDITY AND MISTING	The species tolerates a wide range of humidity, but does best at 60-70 % day to day and up to 80 % in the breeding season. Mist the enclosure daily with decalcified water, heavily in warm weather and a little less when it is cold.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	Place a shallow water bowl in the enclosure, and keep it full at all times. The frogs are poor swimmers, so the bowl must be so shallow that they can easily get out, and it must not take up much of the floor.
LIGHTING AND UVB	No UVB requirement is documented for the species. It is, however, active in partial sunlight in the wild, so a weak UVB light (Ferguson zone 1) is probably an advantage, provided there is shade and plants so the animals can choose.
FEEDING	The frog is an eager hunter and as an adult can eat larger prey than most other species in the genus. In the wild it feeds mostly on ants and on beetles, spiders and mites.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Mantella baroni* is diurnal and can be seen patrolling its territory and hunting for food for most of the day.
NATIVE RANGE	Madagascar.