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FROGS

Bernhard's Mantella

Mantella bernhardi

Mantella bernhardi is the smallest frog in the genus, only 19-22 mm, with black flanks and orange undersides on the limbs. It lives in humid lowland forest in south-eastern Madagascar. The species is vulnerable in the wild, and almost nothing is known about its care, so this guide is based on the requirements of the genus: cool, humid and small arthropods.

Family: Mantellidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**19-22 mm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**4-8 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Rainforest and wetland**
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	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**45 × 45 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 4 adults
Temperature, day	**20-23 °C**
Temperature, night	**16-18 °C**
Humidity	**70-100%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Optional** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**Small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**In groups**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Development	**Tadpoles in water**
Egg-laying site	**On the ground**
Sexually mature	**12-18 months**
Eggs per clutch	**12-30**
Hatching	**3-12 days**
Larval period	**56-112 days** from hatching to metamorphosis
Larval diet	**Algae/plants and complete diet**
Parental care	**None**

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
IUCN	**Vulnerable (VU)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE
Almost nothing is known about keeping *Mantella bernhardi*, and the species is only rarely kept. Its care is therefore based on the habitat in humid lowland forest and on the requirements of the genus.

TEMPERATURE
The temperature should be 20-23 °C during the day and 16-18 °C at night. The figures are borrowed from *M. aurantiaca*.

HUMIDITY AND MISTING
Humidity should be 70-100 %. Mist the enclosure daily with decalcified water, heavily in warm weather and a little less when it is cold. The substrate should be damp, but not waterlogged.

WATER AND WATER QUALITY
Place a shallow water dish in the enclosure, and keep it full at all times. The frogs are poor swimmers, so the dish must be so shallow that they can easily get out, and it must not take up much of the floor.

LIGHTING AND UVB
UVB is not documented as necessary for the species. A weak UVB light (Ferguson zone 1) is an option when there is shade and plants so the animals can choose, but it is optional. Light for the plants should not give off heat.

FEEDING
M. bernhardi is the smallest in the genus, so the food must be smaller than for the others. The genus hunts ants, mites and other small arthropods.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING
M. bernhardi is diurnal. The males call from the leaf litter, and they defend territories against one another. The animals are best kept in a small group with many hiding places and plenty of space.

NATIVE RANGE
Madagascar.