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FROGS

## Brown Mantella

# *Mantella betsileo*

*Mantella betsileo* is a small, diurnal frog from Madagascar with a brown to coppery back, often with a pale X-shaped pattern, black flanks and a blue-marbled belly. It grows to 2-3 cm, feeds on ants and other small arthropods and is robust and easy to keep in a group. Many animals in the trade are in fact the almost identical *Mantella ebenaui*.

Family: Mantellidae

### KEY FACTS

#### THE ANIMAL

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

#### CARE

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| Min. enclosure | **45 × 45 × 30 cm**<br>L × W × H for 4 adults |
| Temperature, day | **20-25 °C** |
| Temperature, night | **16-20 °C** |
| Humidity | **60-80%** |
| Water | **Water dish** |
| UVB | **Optional**<br>Ferguson zone 1 |
| Diet | **Small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)** |
| Kept | **In groups** |

#### BREEDING

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| Reproduction | **Egg-laying** |
| Development | **Tadpoles in water** |
| Egg-laying site | **On the ground** |
| Sexually mature | **12-18 months** |
| Eggs per clutch | **25-30** |
| Larval period | **42-56 days**<br>from hatching to metamorphosis |
| Larval diet | **Algae/plants and complete diet** |
| Parental care | **None** |

#### PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

## Care at a glance

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| **THE ENCLOSURE** | A small group of four adults needs an enclosure of at least 45 × 45 × 30 cm (length × width × height), and more animals require more floor area. |
| **TEMPERATURE** | *Mantella betsileo* thrives at room temperature, 20-25 °C by day, and at night the temperature may fall to 16-20 °C. The night temperature is borrowed from related species. |
| **HUMIDITY AND MISTING** | Humidity should be around 60-70 % day to day and up to 80 % in the breeding season, but the species tolerates a wide range. Mist the enclosure daily with decalcified water. The substrate should be damp, but not waterlogged. |
| **WATER AND WATER QUALITY** | Put a shallow water dish in the enclosure, and keep it always full. |
| **LIGHTING AND UVB** | A need for UVB is not known in the species. |
| **FEEDING** | The species is an eager hunter but eats only small feeders. In the wild it feeds on ants, mites and other small arthropods. |
| **BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING** | *Mantella betsileo* is diurnal, but spends a great deal of time under cover. The animals are somewhat shy, and it helps if the enclosure is densely planted. The males call with a peeping call and defend small territories. |
| **NATIVE RANGE** | Madagascar. |