herpy

FROGS

Guibé's Mantella

Mantella nigricans

Mantella nigricans is a small, diurnal frog from the forests along streams in northern and north-eastern Madagascar. It grows to 28 mm and is patterned in green, brown and black with a black belly and blue spots. The species is closely related to *Mantella baroni*, is kept like it and tolerates a wider temperature range than many species in the genus.

Family: Mantellidae

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**27-28 mm** 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	**70-100%**
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	Little is known about the care of *Mantella nigricans*, which is only rarely kept.
TEMPERATURE	During the day the temperature should be 21-24 °C and at night 16-18 °C. The species does well in a wider range than many species in the genus, and 19-26 °C is fine, but longer periods above 26 °C must be avoided.
HUMIDITY AND MISTING	The species lives along streams in rainforest and needs more humidity than *Mantella baroni* and the species that come from dry regions: 70-100 % all year round.
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. A weak UVB light (Ferguson zone 1) is optional and is probably an advantage, provided there is shade and plants so the animals can choose.
FEEDING	*Mantella nigricans* is an eager hunter and prefers crickets and large fruit flies (*Drosophila hydei*) to small fruit flies and springtails. In the wild the diet consists mainly of ants, mites and other small arthropods.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Mantella nigricans* is diurnal and lives mostly on the ground near running water. The animals are rather withdrawn, and the males often call half hidden under dead leaves.
NATIVE RANGE	Madagascar.