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POISON DART FROGS

Manu Poison Frog

Ameerega macero

Ameerega macero is a small, diurnal poison frog of 24-30 mm from the rainforests around Manu in south-eastern Peru and western Brazil. The head and back are bright red, the flanks black with a yellow stripe, and the belly is blue with a black net pattern. The species is rarely kept, and little is known about its care.

Family: Dendrobatidae Former name: *Epipedobates macero*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**2-3 cm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**10-15 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	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**45 × 45 × 45 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**25-28 °C**
Temperature, night	**21-25 °C**
Humidity	**70-100%**
Water	**Water dish** depth 1-2 cm
UVB	**Optional** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**Small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**In pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Development	**Tadpoles carried to water**
Egg-laying site	**On the ground**
Eggs per clutch	**4-16**
Hatching	**10-22 days**
Larval period	**70-90 days** from hatching to metamorphosis
Larval diet	**Algae/plants and complete diet**
Parental care	**Guards the eggs and carries the tadpoles**

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

Little is known about keeping *Ameerega macero*. The species is kept like the equally large *Ameerega petersi*, with which it was long confused, and the figures for enclosure and climate are borrowed from that species.

TEMPERATURE

The daytime temperature is 25-28 °C, and at night it is lowered by 3-4 degrees to 21-25 °C. Animals from the higher parts of the range tolerate cooler nights, and the low end of the range suits best. A winter rest is not necessary.

HUMIDITY AND MISTING

Humidity should be 70-100 %: close to 100 % in the morning and evening, preferably with mist, and about 70-80 % in the middle of the day.

WATER AND WATER QUALITY

A shallow water dish with 1-2 cm of water is enough. The dish must be shallow enough for a juvenile to climb out, with stones or moss at the edge. Change the water often, and clean the dish with hot water without soap.

LIGHTING AND UVB

Provide an LED light with a plant-suitable spectrum for 10-12 hours a day. UVB is not necessary for poison frogs; a weak UVB light (Ferguson zone 1) is optional. Give the frogs shade and cover so they can retreat from the light.

FEEDING

In the wild the frog eats ants, beetles and small larvae of 2-7 mm. In the enclosure use wingless fruit flies (*Drosophila melanogaster* and *D. hydei*), springtails, small isopods, micro crickets and sifted meadow plankton.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

The males call from the ground or from low trunks and probably defend small territories, as their relatives do. In the wild, about ten adults per 1,000 m² may live along a stream.

NATIVE RANGE

Peru and Brazil.