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POISON DART FROGS

Silverstone's Poison Frog

Ameerega silverstonei

Ameerega silverstonei is an orange-red poison dart frog of about 4 cm, known only from the Cordillera Azul on the eastern slopes of the Andes in Peru. It lives in cool mountain forest at about 1,300-1,500 m, is threatened by habitat loss and is rarely kept. Its care requires a cool enclosure.

Family: Dendrobatidae Former name: *Epipedobates silverstonei; Dendrobates silverstonei; Phobobates silverstonei*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**4-5 cm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**8-12 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**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	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**50 × 50 × 50 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**20-24 °C**
Temperature, night	**17-20 °C**
Humidity	**70-100%**
Water	**Water dish** depth 1-2 cm
UVB	**Optional** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**Insects and small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**In pairs or in groups**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Development	**Tadpoles carried to water**
Egg-laying site	**On the ground**
Sexually mature	**15-16 months**
Eggs per clutch	**30-45**
Hatching	**30 days**
Larval period	**55-60 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	**Endangered (EN)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE
Little is known about the care of *Ameerega silverstonei*. What is known is based on the climate of the mountain forest at about 1,300-1,500 m: cool, humid and stable all year round.

TEMPERATURE
By day the temperature should be 20-24 °C, preferably at the cool end, and at night 17-20 °C. It must not rise above 25 °C. Cool air is not a problem as long as the fluctuations are small.

HUMIDITY AND MISTING
Humidity should be 70-100 %: about 70 % in the middle of the day and close to 100 % in the morning and evening. Spray 1-3 times a day with rainwater or reverse osmosis water, or use a rain system and possibly a fogger.

WATER AND WATER QUALITY
A shallow water bowl with 1-2 cm of water is enough. Use rainwater, reverse osmosis water or dechlorinated water, and change it often. The water should be cool, like the air.

LIGHTING AND UVB
The species lives on the shaded forest floor, so the light should be moderate, with shade available. Fluorescent tubes or LEDs with a plant-friendly spectrum for 10-12 hours a day are enough.

FEEDING
Ameerega silverstonei takes small to large feeder insects: large fruit flies (*Drosophila hydei*), newly hatched crickets, the smallest waxworms and small insects swept from meadows.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING
The species is shy and often retreats under leaf litter or cork bark. It can be kept in groups, but the males are territorial, so keep a pair or a group with more females than males.

NATIVE RANGE
Peru.