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POISON DART FROGS

Amazonian Poison Frog

Ranitomeya amazonica

Ranitomeya amazonica is a tiny, diurnal poison frog of 16-19 mm from the Amazon around Iquitos in Peru and Leticia in Colombia. It is black with red, orange or yellow stripes and blue-grey marbling on the legs, breeds in bromeliads and is regarded as one of the easiest small Ranitomeya to keep and breed.

Family: Dendrobatidae Former name: *Dendrobates amazonicus*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**16-19 mm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**5-10 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal and terrestrial**
Habitat	**Rainforest**
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	**40 × 40 × 40 cm** L × W × H for 3 adults
Temperature, day	**21-26 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-21 °C**
Humidity	**70-100%**
Water	**Water dish** depth 1-2 cm
UVB	**Optional**
Diet	**Small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**In pairs or in groups**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Development	**Tadpoles carried to water**
Egg-laying site	**In leaf axils (e.g. bromeliads)**
Sexually mature	**5-8 months**
Eggs per clutch	**2-8**
Hatching	**10-14 days**
Larval period	**60-80 days** from hatching to metamorphosis
Larval diet	**Complete diet and other tadpoles**
Parental care	**Carries the tadpoles**

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

A pair or trio of *Ranitomeya amazonica* needs an enclosure of at least 40 × 40 × 40 cm. If there are to be more frogs, allow about 20 litres of extra space per animal, and choose a tall rather than a low enclosure.

TEMPERATURE

Keep the enclosure at 21-26 °C by day and 18-21 °C at night. The frogs are most active and breed best at the warm end, at 24-26 °C.

HUMIDITY AND MISTING

Humidity should be 70-100 %, preferably 80-100 %. Mist every day, preferably morning and evening, so that the humidity is close to 100 % after misting and falls to about 70-75 % in the middle of the day.

WATER AND WATER QUALITY

Ranitomeya amazonica swims poorly, so the water must be shallow and easy to climb out of.

LIGHTING AND UVB

The frogs are diurnal and live in the shade of the forest. The lighting is first and foremost for the plants: give 12-14 hours of LED plant lighting a day. *Ranitomeya amazonica* has no known need for UVB, so UVB is optional.

FEEDING

Ranitomeya amazonica is so small that it can only take small feeder insects. Juveniles and adults take wingless fruit flies (*Drosophila melanogaster*), and large adults can also take *D. hydei* and newly hatched crickets.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Ranitomeya amazonica is diurnal, but often shy, and young animals in particular hide a lot. In a densely planted enclosure with many dead leaves the frogs come out more.

NATIVE RANGE

Peru and Colombia.