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POISON DART FROGS

Amazonian Poison Frog

Ranitomeya ventrimaculata

Ranitomeya ventrimaculata is a small, diurnal poison frog of under 18 mm from the rainforest of eastern Ecuador, north-eastern Peru and south-eastern Colombia. In the strict sense it is black with thin pink stripes and a blue-grey net pattern on the legs and belly. The name has for decades covered other species in the hobby, so it is important to know what the animals actually are.

Family: Dendrobatidae Former name: *Dendrobates ventrimaculatus; Dendrobates minutus ventrimaculatus; Dendrobates duellmani; Ranitomeya duellmani*

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**15-17 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	**Experienced**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Development	**Tadpoles carried to water**
Egg-laying site	**On the ground**
Eggs per clutch	**1-4**
Larval period	**60-80 days** from hatching to metamorphosis
Larval diet	**Complete diet and other tadpoles**
Parental care	**Carries the tadpoles**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**40 × 40 × 40 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**21-26 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-22 °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**

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

The species in the narrow sense is almost unknown in captivity, and there is no husbandry experience that applies specifically to it. The figures here are the same as for the other small Ranitomeya.

TEMPERATURE

Keep the enclosure at 21-26 °C during the day and 18-22 °C at night. The temperature must never exceed 29 °C, and small enclosures quickly become too warm in summer.

HUMIDITY AND MISTING

Humidity should be 70-100 %: close to 100 % morning and evening and 70-75 % in the middle of the day. Small poison frogs can cope with a brief drop to 50 % if they have clean water to sit in, but this is an emergency measure.

WATER AND WATER QUALITY

Give the frogs a shallow water dish or a small water feature with 1-2 cm of water, so the smallest frog can sit with its head and upper body above the water; the small poison frogs swim poorly.

LIGHTING AND UVB

The frogs are diurnal and live in the shade of the forest. The lighting is first and foremost for the plants: 12-14 hours a day with LED light is common.

FEEDING

Ranitomeya ventrimaculata is so small that it can only take small feeders: springtails, flightless fruit flies (*Drosophila melanogaster*), small tropical isopods and newly hatched crickets. Large adults can take *D. hydei*.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Ranitomeya ventrimaculata is diurnal and lives mostly in the leaf litter on the forest floor. Males call with a rapid buzz. Small Ranitomeya are often shy, but in a densely planted enclosure you typically see more of them.

NATIVE RANGE

Ecuador, Peru and Colombia.