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FROGS

Green Mantella

Mantella viridis

Mantella viridis is a small, diurnal frog of 2-3 cm with a sharp green colour, a black face mask and a blue and white marbled belly. It lives only in the far north of Madagascar, tolerates heat poorly and is threatened in the wild, so only captive-bred animals should be considered.

Family: Mantellidae Published 16 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**2-3 cm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**5-8 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Dry forest and wetland**
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**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**45 × 45 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 4 adults
Temperature, day	**20-24 °C**
Temperature, night	**17-20 °C**
Humidity	**60-80%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Optional** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**Small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**In groups**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Development	**Tadpoles in water**
Egg-laying site	**On the ground**
Eggs per clutch	**40-115**
Larval period	**42-56 days** from hatching to metamorphosis
Larval diet	**Algae/plants and complete diet**
Parental care	**None**

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
IUCN	**Endangered (EN)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	The set-up can be simple. Floor area matters more than height, because *M. viridis* lives almost exclusively on the ground.
TEMPERATURE	During the day the enclosure is kept at 20-24 °C with a drop to 17-20 °C at night. Above 27 °C *M. viridis* is quickly stressed, and in the genus temperatures above 27 °C can quickly become fatal, especially for young animals.
HUMIDITY AND MISTING	Humidity is kept at 60-70 % day to day and up to 80 % in the breeding season, with more humidity down at the bottom and in the moss. The species tolerates a fairly wide range, as long as clean water is always available.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	There must always be a shallow water bowl or a shallow area of water, so the frogs do not dry out at lower humidity. The water must be so shallow that small animals easily get out, and the depth is not documented.
LIGHTING AND UVB	Light is first and foremost for the plants. There is no documentation that *M. viridis* needs UVB, but because the species is active in partial sun in the wild, a weak UVB tube is probably an advantage.
FEEDING	*M. viridis* is a small insectivore that takes small prey.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*M. viridis* is diurnal and best kept as a group. Outside the breeding season the animals are practically passive towards one another, but adult females may fight in the breeding season.
NATIVE RANGE	Madagascar.