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POISON DART FROGS

Yellow-banded Poison Frog

Dendrobates leucomelas

Dendrobates leucomelas is one of the largest and boldest poison frogs: 3-5 cm, bright yellow with broad black bands, diurnal and always out in the terrarium. It is hardy, calls with loud, bird-like trills and is a classic first poison frog.

Family: Dendrobatidae Published 15 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**3-5 cm** snout-vent length
Weight	**3 g**
Lifespan	**10-15 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**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	**Beginner**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**45 × 45 × 45 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**22-26 °C**
Temperature, night	**19-22 °C**
Humidity	**80-95%**
Water	**Water dish** depth 1-2 cm
UVB	**Optional** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**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	**10-24 months**
Eggs per clutch	**2-12**
Hatching	**10-14 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	A pair of *Dendrobates leucomelas* needs a terrarium of at least 45 × 45 × 45 cm.
TEMPERATURE	The daytime temperature is kept at 22-26 °C with a slight drop at night, for example to 19-22 °C. Other figures are 20-27 °C during the day.
HUMIDITY AND MISTING	Humidity should be 80-95 %. Mist once or twice a day with reverse osmosis water or dechlorinated tap water, so that leaf litter and plants become wet, and let the surface dry out a little between mistings.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	A shallow water dish with 1-2 cm of water is enough. The frogs are poor swimmers and can drown in deep water, so the dish must have a low edge or a stone to climb out on.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The frogs and plants need 12 hours of light a day. Use a full-spectrum LED lamp that does not give off much heat, and place it above the lid. No need for UVB has been documented in the species, so UVB is optional.
FEEDING	In the wild *D. leucomelas* eats ants, termites, small beetles and other small insects and spiders.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Dendrobates leucomelas* is diurnal and bold, especially the Venezuelan forms, which are almost always out. The forms from Guyana are shyer.
NATIVE RANGE	Venezuela, Guyana, Brazil and Colombia.