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POISON DART FROGS

Darwin Wallace poison frog

Epipedobates darwinwallacei

Epipedobates darwinwallacei is a small, black poison dart frog of 13-20 mm with orange to yellow spots. It lives in the montane forest around Mindo in north-western Ecuador and is threatened. Since 2024 it has been regarded as a synonym of *Epipedobates espinosai*. Little is known about its care.

Family: Dendrobatidae Published 16 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**13-20 mm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**8-10 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Rainforest and 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	**40 × 40 × 40 cm** L × W × H for 3 adults
Temperature, day	**20-24 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-20 °C**
Humidity	**80-100%**
Water	**Water section** depth 2-5 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**
Eggs per clutch	**10-30**
Hatching	**9-14 days**
Larval period	**42-70 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 *Epipedobates darwinwallacei*, and the species is hardly ever kept.
TEMPERATURE	Keep 20-24 °C during the day and 18-20 °C at night. This corresponds to the cool end of what suits *Epipedobates tricolor* from the same elevation. It is normally achieved with room temperature and the lighting.
HUMIDITY AND MISTING	Humidity should be 80-100 %. Spray several times a day or use a rain system, for example three times a day for 20-60 seconds, preferably supplemented with a fogger.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	Provide a small, permanent water feature with 2-5 cm of water and a gentle slope or ramp so that the frogs can easily climb out.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The light is for the plants: fluorescent tubes or LED bars for about 12 hours a day. The closely related species thrive without UVB, so it is optional.
FEEDING	The frogs are given live, small prey: springtails and fruit flies (*Drosophila melanogaster*), and adults also take the larger *Drosophila hydei* and newly hatched crickets.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*E. darwinwallacei* is diurnal and moves openly between grass and leaf litter. The call is very similar to the call of the brown *E. espinosai* from the lowlands. The males of the genus are territorial and call from fixed spots.
NATIVE RANGE	Ecuador.