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POISON DART FROGS

Marañón poison frog

Excidobates mysteriosus

Excidobates mysteriosus is a small, diurnal poison frog of about 3 cm from the Cordillera del Cóndor in northern Peru. It is black with white dots, breeds in water-filled bromeliads in old montane forest and is threatened in the wild.

Family: Dendrobatidae English name: Marañón Poison Frog Former name: *Dendrobates mysteriosus* Published 16 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**3 cm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**5-10 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal and 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	**45 × 45 × 60 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**21-25 °C**
Temperature, night	**17-20 °C**
Humidity	**80-100%**
Water	**No water dish**
UVB	**Optional**
Diet	**Small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**In pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Development	**Tadpoles carried to water**
Egg-laying site	**In leaf axils (e.g. bromeliads)**
Sexually mature	**10-12 months**
Eggs per clutch	**4-8**
Larval period	**65-75 days** from hatching to metamorphosis
Larval diet	**Algae/plants and complete diet**
Parental care	**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 *Excidobates mysteriosus*. The animals live in humid montane forest close to bromeliads and rocks, with warm days and cool nights.

TEMPERATURE

The temperature at the species' localities has not been measured. 21-25 °C by day and 17-20 °C at night suits the climate in the foothills. The frogs tolerate heat poorly, so avoid longer periods above 27 °C.

HUMIDITY AND MISTING

Humidity should be 80-100 %, and the substrate should be damp all year. Mist with reverse-osmosis or rainwater once or twice a day, or use a rain or fogging system.

WATER AND WATER QUALITY

A water dish is not necessary, because the frogs get moisture from the misting and from the water-filled bromeliads. The water in bromeliads and film canisters is replaced with fresh reverse-osmosis or rainwater every week.

LIGHTING AND UVB

The species is diurnal and lives in shade under dense foliage, so the lighting should first and foremost support plant growth and a day of 12 hours. UVB is not necessary, but optional.

FEEDING

Excidobates mysteriosus is large enough to take flightless fruit flies (*Drosophila melanogaster*), springtails and, once the animals are adult, *Drosophila hydei*. In the wild the species eats ants and small flies.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

The species is diurnal, and the male calls loudly and often from the plants and rocks in the enclosure. It is best kept as a pair, because several animals together can cause conflict.

NATIVE RANGE

Peru.