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POISON DART FROGS

Black-legged Poison Dart Frog

Phyllobates bicolor

Phyllobates bicolor is a yellow to orange poison frog of 3-5 cm from the rainforest of western Colombia, often with black or greenish legs. In the wild it is one of the most poisonous animals known, but captive-bred animals are non-poisonous. It is bold, curious and almost always on view, and it breeds readily in the enclosure.

Family: Dendrobatidae Published 15 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**3-5 cm** snout-vent length
Weight	**4.5 g**
Lifespan	**6-20 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial**
Habitat	**Rainforest**
Skin toxins in the wild	**Strong**
Skin toxins in captivity	**None** Captive-bred animals. Wild-caught animals can keep their toxins for a long time
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**50 × 50 × 50 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**21-25 °C**
Temperature, night	**18-21 °C**
Humidity	**70-100%**
Water	**Water dish** depth 1-2 cm
UVB	**Optional** Ferguson zone 1
Diet	**Insects and 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	**12 months**
Eggs per clutch	**4-30**
Hatching	**13-14 days** at 21-23 °C
Larval period	**21-60 days** from hatching to metamorphosis
Larval diet	**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	A pair of *Phyllobates bicolor* needs a rainforest enclosure of at least 50 × 50 × 50 cm.
TEMPERATURE	Figures for the daytime temperature range from 21-23 °C to 23-26 °C, so 21-25 °C is a safe range. At night the temperature is lowered by 3-4 degrees, to 18-21 °C.
HUMIDITY AND MISTING	Humidity should be 70-80 % in the middle of the day and up to 100 % morning and evening. A rain system and a fogging system on timers make this easiest, and the fog clearly makes the frogs call and move about.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	The species appreciates a water surface in the enclosure.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The lighting is first and foremost for the plants. Fluorescent tubes or LED for about 12 hours a day are enough.
FEEDING	*Phyllobates bicolor* prefers small feeder insects of no more than about 3 mm.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Phyllobates bicolor* is diurnal, very active and curious and almost always on view. The males call loudly with trilling, buzzing tones, sometimes for several days at a time.
NATIVE RANGE	Colombia.