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POISON DART FROGS

Brazilian Poison Frog

Ranitomeya vanzolinii

Ranitomeya vanzolinii is a small, diurnal poison frog of 17-19 mm from the western Amazon. It lives in the trees and rears its young in water that collects in bromeliads. The female feeds the tadpoles with unfertilised eggs.

Family: Dendrobatidae Former name: *Dendrobates vanzolinii* Published 16 November 2026

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**17-19 mm** snout-vent length
Lifespan	**5-6 years**
Active	**By day**
Lifestyle	**Arboreal**
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	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**40 × 40 × 40 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**23-26 °C**
Temperature, night	**19-23 °C**
Humidity	**70-100%**
Water	**Water dish** depth 1-2 cm
UVB	**Optional**
Diet	**Small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies)**
Kept	**In pairs or in groups**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Development	**Tadpoles carried to water**
Egg-laying site	**In leaf axils (e.g. bromeliads)**
Eggs per clutch	**1-6**
Hatching	**10-14 days**
Larval period	**60-80 days** from hatching to metamorphosis
Larval diet	**Complete diet and unfertilised eggs from the female**
Parental care	**Carries the tadpoles and feeds the tadpoles with eggs**

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Appendix II**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE

A terrarium of 40 × 40 × 40 cm is the minimum for a pair of *Ranitomeya vanzolinii*, and the figures given go up to 50 × 50 × 50 cm.

TEMPERATURE

The daytime temperature should be 23-26 °C, and at night it is lowered by 3-4 °C to 19-23 °C. The variation over the year should be small, 1-2 °C. A hot spot is not necessary, and the species has no winter rest.

HUMIDITY AND MISTING

Humidity should be 70-100 %. Morning and evening it should be close to 100 %, and at midday it may fall to 70-75 %. The terrarium is misted daily, preferably morning and evening, with reverse-osmosis or rain water.

WATER AND WATER QUALITY

A water dish is not necessary for the adults, but is an advantage, and it can be shallow with 1-2 cm of water.

LIGHTING AND UVB

The lighting requirement for *Ranitomeya vanzolinii* is modest. The frog needs enough light to see its food, and the plants need more. LED lighting for plants or a fluorescent tube, switched on 12-14 hours a day, is suitable.

FEEDING

Ranitomeya vanzolinii feeds on small, live arthropods: fruit flies, springtails, small tropical isopods and newly hatched crickets. Small animals require small feeder insects.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

Ranitomeya vanzolinii is diurnal, but shy. In a densely planted terrarium with many hiding places it shows itself more often than in a sparsely furnished one.

NATIVE RANGE

Brazil and Peru.