

FROGS



(N. Green Tree, Magnificent, Motorbike & W. Spotted)

Each frog species has their unique personalities, needs and characteristics, but all are sure to make wonderful additions to your family. Frogs are the perfect amphibian for a keeper that loves to look – although delicate and not a handling species, you are sure to spend hours watching them hop their way into your heart. Don't forget to keep your ears open for the males lovely singing voices!

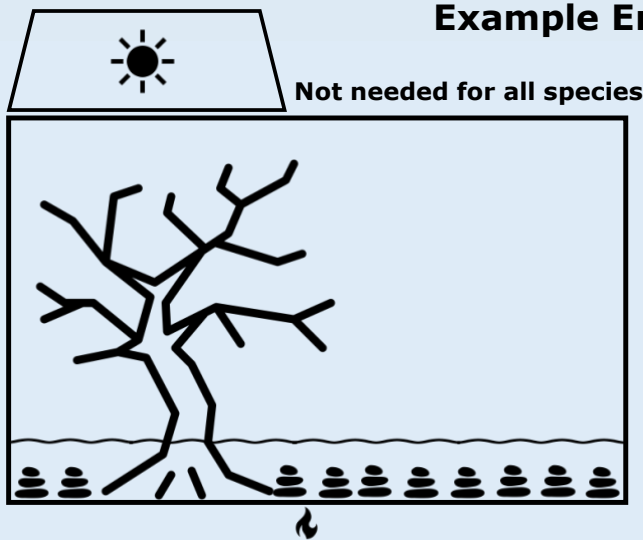
Housing

Enclosure Size: Enclosure size will depend on the number of frogs you intend to house; however, it is important that frogs are at a similar size to avoid any accidental cannibalism if housed together. A single frog should have enough room to hop/jump, climb and maintain a solid thermal gradient (cool end, warm end). Frogs are great climbers but will also spend time on the ground resting, sleeping, or regulating temperature. Frogs are quite sensitive to chemicals as they absorb everything through their skin so enclosures should be kept away from areas with smoke, gas or aerosol sprays. A suitable enclosure size for a pair of frogs would be 60cmLx45cmDx60cmH. Enclosure size can be grown with your frogs as they age and require more room. Only ever clean enclosures with water (no chemicals).

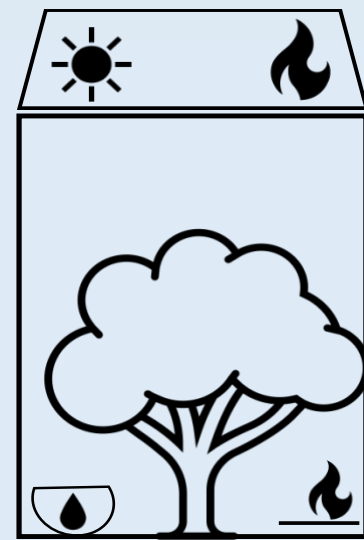
Enclosure materials should also be considered as they offer different traits.

- Glass: waterproof, easy to clean but offers no insulation against heat loss.
- MDF: keeps heat well but is not recommended for frogs.
- Custom enclosures: can be tailored to your needs but can be expensive.
- Specifically designed amphibian enclosures (Reptile One RTF-450HT Terrarium)

Example Enclosure Setup



1. UV light
2. Heat cord (pond heater would also work)
3. Water
4. Rocks and/or gravel
5. Trees/branches for climbing.



1. UV light
2. Heat lamp
3. Heat mat/cord
4. Water bowl (large)
5. Trees/branches for climbing.

Temperature: Most frogs can have a thermal gradient of 32°C in their “warm end” down to no more than 18°C in their “cool end”. If you have incorporated a large pond element to your enclosure, the water temperature should sit at approximately 28°C to create an ambient air temperature of 24-26°C.

Lighting/Heating: There are a few different ways to light and heat your enclosure, and it will depend on if you have a water feature or only a water bowl (see enclosure examples above).

- All frogs will need a daytime UV bulb to promote natural behaviours.
- Top heat via a reflector globe that is set on a timer. (10-12 hours)
- Heat mat/cords for overnight heat in winter (if needed).
- Large ponds will need an aquatic heater (in pond) or a heat mat/cord (outside enclosure) to heat the water and create an ambient temperature without a heat lamp.

The wattage of your lights/heating will depend on the size of your enclosure and should be controlled with a thermometer/thermostat to ensure the correct temperatures are being maintained. Heating elements should not be inside your frog’s enclosure as they may burn themselves on exposed lights/cords.

Substrate: There are several great substrates that can be used for frogs!

- Coco peat: holds humidity well but can get mouldy if not properly changed.
- Fake grass: easy to clean but can smell after time if not cleaned properly.
- Aquarium gravel: easy to clean, drains well but may be ingested.
- Aquarium rocks (large): drain well and cannot be ingested.

Due to their skin absorbency, all substrates will need to be non-toxic and have little to no chemical reaction.

Accessories: Keeping your frog’s enclosure simple to begin with is recommended while you get used to each other. A simple beginner enclosure will include:

- A large, deep water bowl (or aquatic section of enclosure).
- Branches/logs/rocks to climb and bask on
- Fake plant/s to hide in.
- A basket can be used as a rest/hide area.

Handling

Frogs are not a species that should be handled unless necessary; this is due to their delicate nature and skin absorbency. They also tend to hop out of hands which could cause injury if they fall from a large distance (they may also urinate on you if stressed!). If you must handle your frog, there are a few steps you can take to ensure they are as safe and stress free as possible.

- Clean hands thoroughly to ensure there are no chemicals on them.
- Ensure your hands are wet with sterile water while you handle your frog/s.

- Gently pick your frog up from below to reduce stress.
- You may need to use two hands (bottom and top) to ensure your frog doesn't jump and injure themselves.

Pets such as dogs and cats should be out of the room while you are handling your reptile, and supervision is always recommended for young children.

Feeding

Food: Frogs are insectivores, so will eat a variety of different insects. Some may prefer their insects to be alive and moving, however most will need your assistance to identify their food items, so tong feeding is recommended. Any live insects should not be left in the enclosure as they may bite or feed on your frogs while they sleep. Larger frog species can be fed a small rodent (pinkie or velvet mouse) as a rare treat during the summer months.

Water: Water bowls can be cleaned and scrubbed weekly to remove any build-up of hard water or algae; frogs also tend to poop in their water bowls, so clean with hot water to kill any bacteria. Fresh, clean filtered water should always be available to your frogs for bathing, as they will absorb the water via their skin to hydrate, but regular misting is also encouraged. If your enclosure has a large water feature, you may need a pump to help regulate and clean the water. Remember to only use filtered or distilled water when cleaning or refilling water sources.

Supplements: As with most captive reptiles/amphibians, frogs will need calcium incorporated into their diet to ensure healthy bone growth and development. Insects can be dusted with calcium powder every few feeds.

Troubleshooting

My frog isn't eating!

Your new frog/s may need a few days to settle into their new environment – this can be a stressful time for them (and you). A few contributing factors could include:

- Temperature – is your enclosure at the correct heat for the species?
- Excess and/or stressful handling sessions
- Food – a lot of frogs prefer their bugs alive and moving.
- Where enclosure is located in the home – near drafts, direct sunlight etc.

I've lost my pet frog!

Always check your enclosure is closed correctly, and never leave your frog outside of its enclosure unsupervised. If you do lose your new pet, there are steps you can take, and if found, it's suggested that you rinse them in sterile water in case they absorbed anything on their travels.

- If possible, restrict frog to the room it was lost in (i.e., if lost in the lounge room, close all windows, seal doors by wedging a towel underneath, close vents etc.)

- Look in places that emit heat like fridges, dishwashers, behind TVs, windowsills.
- If the animal cannot be located, contact the DBCA (Department of Biodiversity & Attractions) as soon as possible and follow their instructions.

My frog is dry and/or discoloured!

Your frog might let you know it is ill using its body; any changes to physical appearance could mean there is an issue to resolve. They may appear dry, bumpy (when they usually are smooth) or darker in colour than they usually are. Some reasons for this may include:

- Season/time of year
- Body temperature
- Lack of humidity/hydration
- Stress
- Poor diet
- Incorrect heating/lighting

MDB and how to spot it!

Metabolic Bone Disease (MBD) is observed in many captive frogs; this is from a lack of calcium/vitamin D3 and can be prevented by using supplements and correct UV lighting. Frogs will need a full spectrum UV light (we recommend Arcadia Pro T5) to ensure that their bodies can develop bones correctly. Food can also be dusted with calcium powder every few feeds. Some early signs of MBD include:

- Abnormal bone development
- Lethargy
- Poor appetite
- Fractured limbs

Book a One-on-One Session

With over 40 years combined experience in the herpetology industry, the Discover Deadly team share a range on expertise. Consultant sessions are available for general advice or more specific issues. Bookings can be made online for \$30 up to 15 minutes.

Resources

Your first point of contact for advice/enquiries should always be your original breeder, however, there are several professional businesses that can be reached out to.

- Unusual Pet Vets (Murdoch) 08 6117 7440
- Unusual Pet Vets (Osbourne Park) 08 6117 7450
- Busselton Vet Hospital 08 9752 1433
- Discover Deadly 08 9755 1771
- Southwest Pets (Bunbury) 08 9721 6217
- DBCA 08 9442 0300

Further Reading:

- "Keeping Frogs" by Mark Davidson
- "Frogs as Pets" by Michael J. Tyler

This care sheet© has been produced as a general guide for Western Australian reptile keepers. It should not replace the advice of a veterinarian.

Discover Deadly takes no responsibility in the misuse of the information provided.

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