

Phylllobates terribilis

Found on thefroglady.org

Difficulty: Beginner

The Phylllobates terribilis, nicknamed the terrible or golden poison frog, is one of the most toxic animals on earth capable of killing 10-20 adult humans or two African bull elephants. In captivity, they are a harmless muscular frog that can reach 2" in length. The color can vary from a deep yellow to pale yellow to orange to mint. Native to the Pacific coast of Columbia, it was discovered in 1978 by herpetologists Charles W. Myers and Borys Malkin and biochemist John W. Daly. With only one real natural predator, these frogs are rather bold and thanks to their bright coloring they can often be found sitting out in the open.

A lifespan of 10-20 years can be expected in the ideal conditions of captivity.

Locales

Mint- This is the largest and most common variant in captivity. It ranges in color from a silvery pale grey, almost white to pale green and can be mottled with brown and rust. Noticeable black eyes. The mint terribilis can be found in La Brea and La Sirpa areas of Columbia.

Orange- This is similar to yellow but uniform orange with black. The limbs may be slightly lighter than the body. These can be somewhat uncommon but not too hard to find. The orange teribilis' can be found in the Quebrada Guanguí, Columbia.

Yellow- This variant is typically on the smaller side of terribilis. They range in color from lemon to pale or light orange with small black pigment on fingers, lips and snout. This variant can be hard to find. The yellow terribilis can be found in Quebrada Guanguí, Columbia.

Orange-blackfoot- This variant has a bright orange color with dark markings on their feet, throats and rump.

Each locality represents a unique sub-population in the wild and shall not be mixed.

Terrarium Design

Due to Phylllobates terribilis' size and terrestrial activity level, a large terrarium is required.

Terrarium Size

QTY	18X18 X24	24x24 x24	36x18 x24
1 OR PAIR			
TRIO			
4-5			

Temperature

Terribilis prefer low to mid-70°F's but will tolerate temperatures between 60°F-80°F; any temperature over 85°F can be fatally dangerous. Terribilis' can tolerate lower temperatures than most species.

Humidity

Humidity should maintain between 60-90%, 75-85 would be more ideal. Low humidity tank level without fresh water can be fatal.

Lighting

Lighting shall be provided on a 12 on/ 12 off day night timer to mimic their natural conditions. I would recommend a light temperature of 6,500K or brighter for healthy plants.

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Feeding

Adults - Feed *Drosophila hydei*, 20-50/frog every other day - most likely will ignore the smaller *melanogaster* flies

Juveniles- feed daily *hydei* or pinhead crickets.

Captive bred crickets (adults can handle near full grown adults and juveniles will eat pinheads. Bean beetles, Waxworms,. Phoenix worms and fire brats make a good treat a couple times a month. Waxworms are a very high fat food so should be fed sparingly. A variety of food will help keep a balanced diet which has been shown to stimulate breeding behavior.

Supplements

Repashy Calcium Plus - Dust every feeding

Vitamin A -Once a month on breeding adults only.

SuperPig - Once a week.

Groups

The *Phyllobates terribilis* is a great group species as long as enough space is provided. Once they reach sexual maturity the dynamic of the tank will change. Adult females may eat eggs.

Breeding

A pair of mature *terribilis* will begin to breed around 18-24 months old. These frogs are unique as they typically do not require any distinct stimulus as they breed naturally throughout most of the year.

Sexing

Adult *terribilis* can be very hard to sex visually. The adult female *terribilis* tend to be slightly larger than the males. Males may start to call as soon as 8-10 months. Both males & females have been known to call with the females call being shorter and quieter. Females tend to lay eggs before their sex can be found via a visual inspection. The easiest way to determine sex is to play a recording of their call. The males will call back or sit up as females will frantically hop around looking for the male.

Eggs

Eggs can be found on smooth broad leaves or a petri dish under a cocohut. Eggs hatch in 14 days. Male will carry tadpoles to the nearest water source. Only 50% of eggs survive through hatching.

Tadpoles

It will take between 50-70 days for the tadpole to complete metamorphosis. Tadpoles will eat dead algae, fruit flies and a good quality tadpole food. Less than 50% of diet shall be algae based. Tadpoles can be raised communally as they do not secrete large amounts of growth-inhibiting hormone.

Froglets

A newly morphed *terribilis* froglet can take down *Drosophila hydei* which makes them very easy to raise.