



CONCISE CARE SHEETS

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**A M A Z O N
M I L K F R O G**

INTRO

The Amazon Milk Frog (*Trachycephalus resinifictrix*) has become one of the most popular treefrogs in the reptile and amphibian hobby. Much of this is likely due to its attractive coloration and pattern and the large size of adults (3-5"). Most specimens offered for sale are juveniles that are distinctively patterned black-and-white banded frogs, but their contrasting coloration blends into a mix of more subtle browns and greys that are outlined by white at about one year of age (maturity). Light grey to white spots eventually develop and speckle most of the dark dorsal coloration of adults.

Milk frogs have a wide range throughout the lowland rainforests of South America's Amazon Basin being found in eight countries there plus Trinidad and Tobago. They are arboreal inhabitants of the canopy and can be found living more than 100 feet above ground. Life high above the forest floor has resulted in an interesting reproductive strategy. Male Amazon milk frogs vocalize to attract mates and defend territory from hollow tree holes that collect rainwater. Breeding takes place in the holes and female milk frogs deposit their eggs in the tree hole pools. After milk frog tadpoles develop and complete metamorphosis, the froglets emerge from the water having never touched the ground.

The common name "milk frog" refers to the poisonous white skin secretions the frog can secrete when threatened. This behavior is seldom observed in captivity unless the frogs are heavily disturbed or mishandled. They are also sometimes referred to as Mission Golden-eyed Frogs, Adult milk frogs are 2.5-4"+, with males noticeably smaller than females.

GENERAL CARE & ENVIRONMENT

Amazon Milk Frogs are native to the Amazon rainforest canopy and require vertically-oriented terrariums that replicate their jungle habitat. Because these frogs are exposed to sunlight in the canopy, full-spectrum UVA/UVB reptile fluorescent lighting is recommended.

Amazon Milk Frog enclosures may range between 70-85°F, and these frogs are somewhat tolerant of temperature variations. However, most breeders maintain their Amazon Milk Frogs in the mid to high 70s constantly or allow a 5-10°F temperature drop at night. Humidity should be maintained in the 60-80% range and any water used for misting or pools must be dechlorinated.

Since ideal temperature and humidity is of paramount importance, a min/max thermometer with a probe that can be inserted into the enclosure is an essential tool. Both temperature and humidity should be monitored several times each day and observations should be recorded.

HOUSING

Amazon Milk Frogs are large tree frogs that should be kept in an enclosure that offers plenty of room. A standard 29 gallon aquarium (30"L x 12"D x 18"H) is sufficient space for two to four adult frogs, but larger enclosures like the 24"L x 18"D x 18"H ExoTerra Terrarium are preferred by many keepers. A tight-fitting screen cover or other lid is essential to prevent escapes. If screen covers are used portions of the area might require covering with plastic or plexiglass to reduce ventilation and maintain humidity in drier climates. However, Amazon Milk Frogs require good airflow and will not tolerate stagnant conditions. Frogs will feel more secure if only the front of the terrarium is left uncovered for viewing. Aquarium backgrounds or cork or fiber panels may be used to obscure the sides to reduce stress.

Milk Frog enclosures should provide plenty of perching areas created with vines, branches, live or artificial foliage and other cover. A large water dish that creates a pool for the frogs is essential.

FEEDING

Amazon Milk Frogs will feed readily on crickets that have been gut-loaded for maximum nutrition and are dusted with a reptile vitamin and mineral supplement. Since these frogs are largely nocturnal, feeding at

QUICK TIPS

- » 76-82°F with a slight drop in temperature at night (75°F).
- » Requires 60-80% humidity, but also good air movement.
- » Eats insects and other arthropods and thrives on crickets in captivity.

night every other day is appropriate. In addition to crickets, waxworms, small roaches, superworms (kingworms), horn worms, and the occasional pinky mouse may be accepted.

HEALTH

Water quality is essential to healthy frogs and rainwater (or quality tap water that has been allowed to sit uncovered for 24 hours and is then treated with a terrarium/aquarium dechlorinator) must be used. Water should be tested

and treated or replaced as necessary due to high levels of toxins like ammonia. Fungal infections should be treated by a qualified reptile veterinarian (www.arav.org).

SHEDDING

All frogs and toads shed, but most are rarely observed doing so. Amazon Milk Frogs, by contrast, are not shy about shedding at all and will typically shed at least once a week. Prior to shedding they will develop a shiny appearance for a few hours and typically will be found near the bottom of the habitat. They then use their legs to peel off the old skin while eating it., which is a sight that may surprise the new keeper.

HANDLING

Amphibians have moist, delicate skins that are permeable to liquids and toxins and may become vulnerable to infections due to abrasions. They are hands-off terrarium pets.

SEXING AMAZON MILK FROGS

Amazon Milk Frogs are usually sexable about 9 or 10 months of age. Females are larger and have a more rotund body when compared side by side. Males may exhibit a stretched throat from calling that is pale greyish. During breeding season males also develop slightly swollen nuptial pads on their front feet to aid in grasping the female during amplexus.

BREEDING AMAZON MILK FROGS

Amazon Milk Frogs are not exceptionally difficult to breed, but may be difficult to breed consistently. Breeders normally employ seasonal cycling, rain chambers and heavy feeding to stimulate breeding. Female often lay between 300-500 or more eggs, which quickly develop into tadpoles with voracious appetites. After about two months in the water, the tadpoles morph into grey froglets the diameter of a penny.

