



\*Photo Credit: Project Noah.org

## Gladiator Treefrog *(Hypsiboas/Boana rosenbergi)*

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### **Big, and Ready For Battle?**

Also known as the Rosenberg's Treefrog, the Gladiator treefrog is perhaps one of the largest species of treefrogs in the world, hence owing partially to its name! Ranging from the lowland woodlands and tropical forests, and swamplands of Costa Rica, through Panama and Central America, and into Colombia and Ecuador of South America, these treefrogs also earn their name "gladiator" due to their spiny projections (known as their prepollix) located on their front, or fore-feet which are used for, and their highly combative reproductive and territorial behaviors against other males. As their name might suggest, these frogs are highly arboreal, spending much time in the forest canopy. However, in the rainy months of spring to early summer, these frogs will descend to the ground in order to breed and reproduce. During this time, males may create their own "nests" or depressions in, or near formerly dried ponds or wetlands, which are then filled with water during the rainy seasons, and are both defended against from other males, and used as a calling location to attract females. The females, once attracted, will also then lay their eggs in these depressions that the males create as well.

These large treefrogs can normally be easily identified by their tan, to light brown, yellowish or yellowish-brown, to reddish or reddish-brown ground colors, and narrow, dark stripe running from the center of the snout, to about the center of the back of the head and neck. Their eyes are also comparatively large as well, with horizontal pupils, and distinctive, spiny prepollix projections on their fore-feet used by males to combat. These frogs also may have paler yellow, or orange coloration in between their toes, undersides, and groin areas as well. Gladiator treefrogs are a popular and sought after treefrog species in the reptile, and pet industries, due to their size, and reputation for unique combatting behaviors. For the more intermediate to moderate level enthusiast, these large treefrogs would likely be a must have for any collection!

### **Taxonomy**

**Life:** All living, physical, and animate entities

**Domain:** Eukaryota

**Kingdom:** Animalia

**Phylum/Sub Phylum:** Chordata/Vertebrata

**Class:** Amphibia

**Order:** Anura

**Suborder:** Neobatrachia

**Family:** Hylidae

**Genus:** Hypsiboas/Boana

**Species:** *Hypsiboas/Boana rosenbergi*\*

*\*Taxonomy subject to change and revision.*

### **Lifespan and Longevity**

Captive and wild longevity of this species is uncertain. However, if provided the proper care, Gladiator treefrogs can attain potential longevity of 10 to 15 years or more.

### **Distribution and Habitat**

Gladiator treefrogs occur in Central and South America, ranging from Costa Rica, through Panama, and into Northwestern, Coastal South America, from Ecuador, to Colombia. Within this range, these large and iconic treefrog species occupy the canopies to mid-level stories of humid, lowland tropical forests and woodlands, to swamps and seasonal wetlands, primary and secondary forests, and sometimes even more disturbed areas. They will also descend to the ground during the rainy spring to early summer months in order to breed and create artificial depressions in seasonally, or dried wetland areas.

### **Experience Level Required**

Intermediate/Moderate.

### **Size**

Rosenberg's, or Gladiator treefrogs can be large treefrog species, ranging from about 2.75 to 3 ½ inches snout to vent length, or about 70 to 90 mm in length.

### **Housing and Enclosure**

***Enclosure System: Primarily Moist-Arboreal.*** Housing must be sealed and escape proof with a secured top or aquarium hood. A 20 to 30 gallon tall glass aquarium or terrarium is suitable for a single Gladiator treefrog. As with many amphibians, there is the potential for cannibalism or combat between males, and should therefore not be housed together, particularly with smaller frogs. Provide several horizontal perches for the frog to climb and rest on. Provide additional live or artificial foliage, logs, cork bark, or other cage furnishings for added security and aesthetic appeal. Substrates that retain some moisture and humidity should be used such as paper towels, or sphagnum moss, cypress mulch, or potting soil for more naturalistic enclosures. Substrate should be pesticide free. Provide a large, shallow water dish in the enclosure and change at least 2 to 3 times weekly. Spot clean daily.

### **Temperature, Lighting, and Humidity**

Gladiator treefrogs have simple and undemanding heating and lighting requirements in captivity, and do not require additional UVA/UVB lighting, although providing it in moderated amounts can be greatly beneficial for their health, immune system, and overall wellness. For any supplemental heating that may be needed, use a low wattage incandescent or UVA/UVB bulb, radiant or ceramic heat emitter, or UTH (under tank heating element). Maintain these tree frogs at higher humidity at around 70 to 80%, and be sure to mist the enclosure at least once daily. These moderate to large treefrogs can be maintained at around 70 to 85 degrees F while providing a 12 to 14 hour light cycle if overhead lights are used. More specific lighting, heating, and humidity product suggestions and recommendations that can best suit one's needs, as well as those of one's animals can be given as well.

### **Feeding, Diet, and Nutrition**

***Insectivorous;*** In the wild, Gladiator tree frogs are insectivorous, and will eat insects, arachnids, and other invertebrates they can catch. They will also occasionally catch and consume smaller vertebrates as well. In captivity, feed these treefrogs a variety of appropriately sized feeder

insects such as crickets, roaches, mealworms, superworms, and waxworms. They can also be fed microfauna including springtails, isopods, and fruit fly cultures. Feeder insects should be gut-loaded in order to increase their optimal nutritional value. Gladiator treefrogs also require additional calcium and vitamin D3 supplementation 1 to 2 times weekly or as otherwise directed for optimal health and development. This is in order to prevent Metabolic Bone Disease (MBD) and other growth and nutritional deficiencies. Their feeding frequency will depend on the age, size, and overall health of your animal. Use care as to not overfeed them, as obesity and other health related issues can become an issue. More specific dietary and supplementary product suggestions and recommendations that can best suit one's needs, as well as those of one's animals can be given as well.

### **Handling**

Gladiator tree frogs will tolerate some level of careful but deliberate handling, but are fragile and delicate species. All amphibians breathe and respire through their skin, as well as absorb water through this means. It is therefore important to avoid wearing any chemicals or lotions on your hands, which can be potentially harmful or even fatal to amphibians. It is also important to wash or rinse hands thoroughly, and ensure they are adequately moistened before and after handling any amphibians in order to prevent them from drying out.

**\*\*Also be sure to practice basic cleanliness and hygiene associated with proper husbandry after touching or handling any animals or animal enclosures to prevent the possibility of contracting salmonellosis or any other zoonotic pathogens\*\***

### **Contact**

Authored by Eric Roscoe. For any additional questions, comments, and/or concerns regarding this animal, group of animals, or this care sheet, please email and contact:

[Eric.S.Roscoe@gmail.com](mailto:Eric.S.Roscoe@gmail.com)

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