



**Photo Credit: Justin Touchon*

Costa Rican/Lemur Leaf frog *(Hylomantis lemur)*

Bright Eyed and in Peril

The Costa Rican Lemur Frog is a highly arboreal species of hylid frog (the family in which most species of treefrogs belong to) indigenous to Costa Rica, Panama, and into northwestern Colombia in South America. This species is a relatively small and slender treefrog with long and flexible limbs and toes for gripping and climbing. Costa Rican lemur leaf frogs typically range in color from bright green, to mottled green or yellowish in dorsal and bodily color with large, silver eyes, enlarged orange toe pads and digits with webbed feet, and yellowish to orangish coloration along their sides, or laterals, feet and digits, and ventral surfaces. These nocturnal frogs also have some color changing abilities as well, and can also be a reddish-brown ground color at night, or depending on the conditions. Despite their bright and contrasting colors, these treefrogs can be very cryptic when resting on leaves or other vegetation with their eyes closed and bodily colors not exposed. Costa Rican lemur treefrogs also utilize a deimatic defensive behavior of suddenly opening their large, brightly colored eyes as a sudden defense to startle potential predators. They are also strong and active jumpers as well. Unfortunately, Costa Rican lemur frogs are currently critically endangered in the wild due to habitat loss and destruction, and emerging chytrid and other amphibian fungal diseases, and captive breeding of this, and other species by the more intermediate to experienced reptile and amphibian enthusiast can prove to greatly benefit this highly unique species.

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: Hylomantis

Species: *Hylomantis lemur**

**Taxonomy subject to change and revision.*

Lifespan and Longevity

If provided the proper care, Costa Rican lemur leaf frogs can attain longevity of 10 to 15 years or more in captivity.

Distribution and Habitat

Costa Rican lemur leaf frogs are an iconic hylid frog species of the tropical, humid lowlands, tropical forests, and rainforests, often near rivers, ponds, and other wetlands of Central America and into northern and northwestern South America. They may specifically be found from Costa Rica, through Panama, and into northwestern Colombia in South America within this range.

Experience Level Required

Intermediate/Moderate.

Size

Adult Costa Rican Lemur Leaf frogs typically reach up to 1 ½ to 2 ½ inches in size.

Housing and Enclosure

Enclosure System: Primarily Moist-Arboreal. Housing must be sealed and escape proof with a secured top or aquarium hood. A 10 to 15 gallon tall glass aquarium or terrarium is suitable for a pair of these 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. Any enclosures and substrates used should retain higher levels of humidity for this species.

Temperature, Lighting, and Humidity

Lemur Leaf Frogs have fairly 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 frogs at ambient temperatures of between 75 and 80 degrees F, but do not allow for temperatures to drop below or rise above this range except for nighttime temperatures, which can be 65 to 72 degrees F. Also be sure to provide a 12 to 14 hour light cycle if overhead lights are used. This species requires moderate to higher humidity levels of 70 to 80% using a misting or fogging system, as well as a large shallow water dish, although conditions should not become too dry or too wet. 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, Lemur leaf frogs are insectivorous, and will eat insects, arachnids, and other invertebrates they can catch. In captivity, feed these frogs 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. These frogs 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

Lemur leaf frogs are rather delicate and fragile amphibians that should only be handled when necessary. 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

Disclaimer: Note that the information provided in these, or any care sheets, are not intended to be all-exhaustive, and further research and care should always be sought and provided when it comes to any species one may prospectively be interested in. These care sheets are also not intended to serve as substitutes for professional veterinary medical care and husbandry should any animal require it. Always seek proper and professional veterinary care for any animal should the need arise, and be prepared ahead of time for any and all husbandry costs and expenses that may occur with any animal beyond the initial purchase. Any animal owned is ultimately a matter of personal/individual care and responsibility. We cannot make any claims or guarantees regarding any information in this care sheet therein. This care sheet may be reprinted or redistributed only in its entirety.

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