



# Fish & Feather

## CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF AUSTRALIAN FROGS

Australian frogs are fast becoming a popular inclusion to our homes as pets. Their growth in popularity is largely due to their striking, colorful and often unusual appearance. Their peaceful nature, coupled with the need for only a few basic demands, makes them a logical choice for anyone, young or old, looking for something a little special.

### HOUSING

Glass fish tanks provide all basic requirements necessary for housing frogs. Because glass tanks are easy to clean and are readily available in all shapes and sizes, they make a logical choice for housing your frogs. Glass also provides the best possible viewing of your pet anurans (frogs). A consideration that should be given to any frog enclosure is that it has the facility to be easily cleaned. This is best done via a hole drilled in the base of the enclosure. By drilling the hole beneath the land area, water can be poured through the substrate, which in turn, washes away any impurities and bacteria that may build up. Plants will also flourish in a well drained area.

### VENTILATION

Good ventilation is essential in any frog enclosure. A good supply of clean air is vital to the health of all frogs. A lid constructed from a smooth sturdy frame and a soft mesh (much like a fly wire screen from the windows around your house) provides a sufficient avenue for good air circulation. Steel mesh and any rough edged frame should be avoided as they could lead to an injury of your frog. Any lid, whatever the construction, should be tight fitting to prevent your frog from escaping. A complete glass lid is definitely not recommended. Remember, frogs are great escape artists and can slip through very narrow gaps.

### FEEDING

Insects and spiders make up the major part of most Australian frogs diet. Frogs detect food primarily by sight. Any moving object, small enough to be consumed is usually considered as dinner. This can include smaller frogs. Bear this in mind if you are thinking of housing your "Dainty tree frogs" with your "White-lipped tree frogs". Crickets, flies and cockroaches are the most readily available food source through the pet industry (Remember the must be alive). Dusting the food source with calcium and multivitamin powders will ensure that you are providing your frogs with the nutrients that they require in a diet. As they say "variety is the spice of life", so avoid a strict diet of one type of food.

### WATER

The most important factor when considering any water associated with frogs is that it is clean. Frogs spend most of their life around water, and while some may live long distances from the body of water, all frogs require water in some form, which they do not drink but absorb it through their permeable skin. In a frog enclosure, a water reservoir can be in the form of a small dish or a larger partitioned off area of the enclosure (the latter of these two is the better way to go.) but the area of water will always depend on the type of frog that you want to keep. All frogs which are legally allowed to be kept in Victoria will require water for breeding. Breeding is most often determined by the onset of seasonal rain. Increasing the amount of water in your enclosure is important if your male and female frogs are going to breed (Spawn).

You will of course need to filter this water and do weekly changes as to keep levels of toxins such as ammonia and nitrates down and to keep the pH at a neutral level ( 7.0) to keep the frogs at the healthiest.

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