

# CAL ZOO'S REFERENCE SHEET

## TOMATO FROGS

Latin name	Dyscophus guineti	Maximum length	Males 2 - 3 inches, Females 4 inches
Native to	Madagascar	Approximate life span	6 - 8 years

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Cal Zoo offers captive bred young Tomato Frogs, as well as field collected adults. Captive young are grayish tan and as they grow their colors appear to "ripen". As adults the colors may vary from yellowish orange to deep red. Tomato Frogs will reach sexual maturity in 9 - 14 months. Tomato Frogs are nocturnal, sleeping in the substrate during the day and becoming active at night. They are quite famous in Madagascar for their beautiful nighttime serenades. When disturbed Tomato Frogs will inflate themselves with air and assume a defensive stance to appear even larger.

### ENCLOSURE

Up to 3 adult Tomato Frogs can be housed in a 15 gallon aquarium with a screen top. Tomato Frogs are ground dwelling amphibians that do not climb well. When looking for an enclosure, floor space is more important than height.

### SUBSTRATE

The bottom substrate should consist of loose, semi-moist peat moss or humus mixed with potting soil about 2 - 3 inches deep. These items are readily available at your local garden center. The substrate should also consist of a damp top layer of dead leaves, Zoo Med REPTI BARK™ and sphagnum moss. This additional layer will help provide cover, and help maintain a steady humidity level. Make sure all substrates are pesticide and Styrolite® free. Change the substrate about every 8 - 12 weeks, more often if appears dirty. Provide lots of hiding places in the form of cork bark, and silk or live plants to encourage exercise for strong bone development in growing frogs.

### TEMPERATURE & HUMIDITY

Adult frogs should be kept at 80 - 82°F, with a nighttime drop to 75 - 77°F. Young Tomato Frogs like it cooler, 76 - 78°F. Temperatures should not exceed 80°F until they are adults. The terrariums of both adults and young frogs should be misted each evening with fresh, cool (75°F) de-chlorinated water to keep the moss damp but not soggy. Keep a high humidity level of 70 - 75%. Do not allow it to get so humid that water droplets form on the glass. If the humidity level is kept too high it will be detrimental to the well being of your pets.

### HEATING

Use a Zoo Med REPTITHERM® UNDER TANK HEATER (U.T.H.). Do not turn the tank heater off. Leave it on 24 hours a day and use it in conjunction with a Zoo Med RHEOSTAT™ for easy heat control. Heat only one half of the tank. Always use a thermometer and humidity gauge in all reptile & amphibian enclosures.

### LIGHTING

Full spectrum lighting is required for Tomato Frogs, 8 hours a day is preferred. The Zoo Med REPTI IGUANA LIGHT UVB310™ with its high UVB and UVA output is an excellent choice. The UVB is necessary for the Tomato Frogs mineral absorption and will bring out the nice red colors. All reptiles and amphibians need a photo period. A plug in timer (for your lights only, do not use a timer for your heating devices) works well to develop a regular photo period (light cycle) of 8 - 10 hours of light, 14 - 16 hours of dark. Reptiles and amphibians cannot see the red light spectrum, so a low wattage red bulb is ideal for nighttime viewing of your Tomato Frogs.

### FOOD & WATER

Adult frogs should be fed every other day. They will eat large crickets, meal worms, meal worm beetles, earthworms, small pinkie mice and fly larvae. Adults can eat from 9 - 12 crickets in one feeding. Young frogs should be fed every day. They will eat small crickets, fruit flies, small sow bugs (pill bugs) and freshly shed small meal worms. Feed 2x daily (once during the day, once at night). Feed as much as they will eat until they are full grown. Always feed your crickets assorted fruits and vegetables or a commercially prepared cricket diet 12 - 24 hours before feeding the crickets to your pets. Every other day, dust the crickets with Zoo Med REPTIVITE® vitamins just before feeding them to your adult Tomato Frogs, for young frogs dust the crickets every other feeding with Zoo Med REPTIVITE® and a powdered calcium supplement. Provide a 1 - 2 inch shallow plastic water dish sunk into the substrate that your frogs can get in and out of easily. The water depth should be ½ the height of the Tomato Frog. All amphibians absorb water through their skin, so the water should always be clean. Change water at least every other day with fresh de-chlorinated or spring water with a temperature of about 75°F. Change more often if the water appears dirty.

### NOTES

If you must pick up your Tomato Frogs do so carefully and not too roughly. As a defense they may excrete a sticky white fluid from their cheeks that can irritate your skin. This white fluid should not be allowed to come in contact with any open wounds, your eyes, mouth or mucous membranes. Always wash your hands before and immediately after handling reptiles and amphibians. Never leave live food long term with reptiles & amphibians. They can inflict severe harm, even kill your pet. If your animals take some time to eat or you feed them at night, leave a slice of potato, carrot or dry dog food for the live food items to eat. Your local pet shop is an ideal source for reptile and amphibian related books and supplies. Please make sure you read and become familiar with any instructions provided with reptile support products you may purchase. For further information on reptiles and

amphibians we recommend you read *REPTILES MAGAZINE* and *THE VIVARIUM*. California Zoological Supply hopes you have enjoyed reading this reference sheet on Tomato Frogs. We hope that our guidelines will assist you with the care or possible purchase of your new pet.

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