

Green-and-Black Poison Dart Frog

Scientific Name: *Dendrobates auratus*

Class: Amphibia

Order: Anura

Family: Dendrobatidae



The frog has a slim body with a rounded snout, slender legs with toes and fingers having small adhesive discs for climbing. The frog is one to two and three eighths inches long depending on the area where it is living. It has no teeth. Its color also varies with location. It may be green and black, bronze with splotches of metallic green or light blue with black or brown bands. Its color alerts potential predators that its skin holds a poisonous liquid. The liquid is most unpleasant to the taste as well as being poisonous. Captive frogs do not produce dangerous skin toxins. This is because their diet in captivity does not include the insects they eat in the wild. Only two species of the poison dart frogs have been used to poison darts and arrows, but the whole genus received the name.

Range

Central America (Panama and Costa Rica) and South America (Northwestern Columbia). Has also been introduced to the Hawaiian Island of Oahu.

Habitat

Rain forest floor near small streams.

Gestation

Incubation: become tadpoles in two to four weeks

Litter

Clutch size: 6-8 eggs

Behavior

The frog is active during the day, foraging in the leaf litter for its food. It moves in short hops and is rarely still for more than a few moments. They are territorial and will dispute their territory by having “wrestling matches.”

Reproduction

Before eggs are laid the male and female jump and hit each other for two or three hours. Mating is done by amplexus in which the male clasps the female while she lays her eggs. He fertilizes these immediately after they are expelled before the jelly which surrounds them swells. Eggs are laid on the ground and are guarded by the male who periodically sheds water, removes fungus and rotates the eggs. The male then attaches the larvae to his back by a mucous secretion and carries them to small pools of water. Here they develop into tadpoles and eventually into frogs by metamorphosis.

Wild Diet

Ants, termites and other small Arthropods (Spiders, insects)