

Horned (Pac-Man) Frog

Ceratophrys ornata



CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Horned frogs come from the damp, humid forests of South America. Their name refers to the fact that the top of their head comes to a point over their eyes and looks like horns. They also have the nickname “Pac-man Frog,” after the popular video game.



Is a horned frog the right companion animal for you?

| Yes | No |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Check “Yes” or “No” after reading the following statements:

- I have an appropriate location and space for a horned frog.
- I can commit to handling horned frogs as little as possible.
- I feel comfortable providing live food to a frog.
- I can commit to providing proper care for this horned frog.
- A mature person will provide responsible and primary care for this companion animal.

If you answered “Yes” to these statements, a horned frog may be the right choice for you! Continue reading about how to care for a horned frog and consult with a PETCO associate to learn more. PETCO is committed to responsible companion animal care.

Average Size 4 to 8 inches long

Life Span 5 to 7 years with proper care

Diet Provide a variety of live insects, such as crickets and mealworms; goldfish; frozen, thawed rodents, warmed to room temperature; Dust the insects daily with a pure calcium supplement and once or twice weekly with a vitamin/mineral supplement. Clean, fresh, filtered, chlorine-free water, changed daily

Feeding Feed growing frogs daily; feed adults once or twice a week; Obesity is a common problem in large terrestrial frogs, regulate their diets carefully. **If feeding your frog live rodents, do not leave them unattended. Live rodents can injure the frog, sometimes fatally.**

Housing Size – Juveniles, 10-gallon tank minimum; full-grown male needs a 20+-gallon tank; keep only one horned frog to a tank

Temperature – Maintain a range of 68° F. to 80° F., use a heat source when needed

Humidity – Maintain humidity by misting or with a glass top over part of the screen lid

Substrate – Provide a deep substrate, such as commercial mulch, bark chips, large gravel, sphagnum moss, or sterile potting soil

Water – Provide a constant supply of clean, fresh, filtered, chlorine-free water in a shallow bowl that cannot be tipped over and large enough for the frog to soak in and drink from; replace water daily

Keep their environment very clean

Do not house different species of reptiles together

Recommended Supplies

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Glass aquarium | <input type="checkbox"/> Spray bottle | <input type="checkbox"/> Net or scoop |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Substrate/commercial mulch | <input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer and humidity gauge | <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin supplement powder |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gloves for handling frog | <input type="checkbox"/> Heat source | <input type="checkbox"/> Calcium supplement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fluorescent lights | <input type="checkbox"/> Live crickets/mealworms | <input type="checkbox"/> Water conditioner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Book about horned frogs | <input type="checkbox"/> Tongs for feeding | <input type="checkbox"/> Water and food dishes |

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Normal Behavior and Interaction

Sedentary, aggressive, gluttonous, and cannibalistic when given the chance; awake during the day; can overpower and swallow prey almost its own size

Have very delicate skin which can be harmed by oils from human hands; handle with gloves
Shed periodically; after their skin is shed, they will eat it

Habitat Maintenance

Use an appropriate sized, small-mesh, soft net to move or block the frog while doing habitat maintenance; avoid handling; if you handle them be sure to wear latex gloves; residue or oil on your skin can harm amphibians

Thoroughly clean the tank at least once a week: set frog aside in a secure habitat; scrub the tank and furnishings with a 3% bleach solution; rinse thoroughly with water, removing all smell of bleach; dry the tank and furnishings; and add clean substrate

Change the water bowl after every visit, using water without chlorine or other additives

Grooming and Hygiene

Inspect skin for abrasions or signs of parasites, infection, or disease

Handle frogs as little as possible; always wash your hands before and after touching your horned frog or habitat contents to help prevent *Salmonella* and other infectious diseases

Signs of a Healthy Animal

- Eats regularly
- Active and alert
- Healthy skin; clear eyes
- Maintains weight; avoids obesity

Common Health Issues

| Health Issue (alpha) | Symptoms or Causes | Suggested Action |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Chemical Intoxication | Caused by exposure to soap, detergent, pesticides, etc. | May be lethal; be sure to protect your frog from exposure. |
| Intestinal Obstruction | Caused by swallowing gravel or by eating too many hard-shelled insects. | Consult with an exotic animal veterinarian; surgery may be required. |
| Nutritional Deficiencies | Weak hind legs, lethargy, lighter or darker skin color. | Ensure a varied diet; use vitamin and mineral supplements. Consult with an exotic animal veterinarian. |
| Skin Problems | Abrasions, bacterial and fungal infections. | Consult with an exotic animal veterinarian for treatment. |

Red Flags

- Lethargy
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Bloated abdomen
- Skin lesions
- Distressed breathing
- Weak leg movements

If you notice any of these signs, please contact your exotic animal veterinarian.

Sources

Horned Frogs by R. Hunziker
The General Care and Maintenance of Horned Frogs by Philippe De Vosjoli
The Horned Frog Family and African Bullfrogs (Reptile Keepers Guide) by Richard D. Bartlett, Patricia Pope Bartlett

Note: The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, please refer to the above sources or contact your veterinarian as appropriate.