Aurora ANIMAL + HOSPITAL
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Pacman Frog Care

Please note these care sheets are intended for the average reptile owner to ensure that your pet is receiving basic care needed to have a healthy life and there are other aspects of advanced care that can be considered for healthy pets.

Brief Description



The pacman frog *(Ceratophrys species)* is also known as Argentine horned frogs or ornate horned frogs. Pacman frogs start as tadpoles. They come in a variety of colors including green, albino, strawberry, leopard, etc. They are sedentary predators often waiting until food approaches them rather than hunting. You will often see them buried in the substrate with only their face or even just their eyes showing. Handling should be only when necessary and with gloves as their skin is very sensitive to even the oils of our skin.

Lifespan

With proper care the average expected lifespan is 5-7 years although some can live twice that long with good care.

Sexing

Females tend to be larger (4-7”) than males (2-4”) when they reach their adult size around 1 to 1 ½ years of age.

Caging

A 10-20 gallon tank can house an adult pacman frog. Pacman frogs should be kept individually as they will often try to (and successfully) eat each other when kept together, especially males.

Substrate

As avid burrowers there should be at least a few inches of substrate such as coco coir and sphagnum moss that is kept damp (not wet). The water used to keep the substrate damp should be kept clean and tap water needs to be treated for chlorines and chloramines with a water conditioner as amphibian skin is very porous and will absorb toxins from the environment easily. Bottled water is an alternative to treated tap water. A shallow water bowl or pot saucer is recommended. Non-toxic plants like pothos can be planted directly in the substrate and grow well in this environment providing hiding spots and some filtration of the environment. Pacman frogs cannot swim well so should not have access to deep water. Substrate should be cleaned and replaced every few months.

Lighting and Temperature

Pacman frogs do okay at room temperature but should have a warm area of **80-85 degrees**. Especially if your frog is not very active or eating well the addition of a heat source of 85 degrees is needed. They will burrow into the substrate to stay moist and cool down if needed.

Pacman frogs theoretically do not require UVB light, however recent research suggests that they may benefit from UVB light and metabolic bone disease is seen commonly in these species. UVB lighting is recommended to prevent metabolic bone disease but should be low intensity (2.0 bulb).

Humidity

As long as the substrate is kept damp at all times with appropriately treated water and deep enough for the pacman frog to burrow overall humidity should not be of concern. Misting the cage and having live plants will help keep the substrate moist and humidity up. Moss is often consumed by pacmans and can cause impactions so use it with caution.

Food

Pacman frogs have voracious appetites and easily become obese if fed too much. Crickets and/or tropical Dubia roaches are the best staple diet and can be gutloaded for appropriate nutrition. Worms (earthworms, hornworms, silkworms) can be supplemented for variety. Wax worms and mealworms should only be given as an occasional treat because of the high fat content. Prey items should be no longer than the width of your frog's head to prevent choking. Pinkie mice can be offered very sparingly but do have high fat contributing to obesity, and protein which is hard on the kidneys.

Gutloading
Gutloading is the process of feeding crickets, superworms, and/or dubia roaches a nutritious diet so they can ultimately provide your reptile with the proper nutrients it requires as it would in nature. Supplementing with a calcium and multivitamin powder is important, but not sufficient alone.

Creating a well-rounded gutload at home can seem daunting but can actually be fairly inexpensive and easy to make! Each time you go to the store get one or two staple vegetables on the list, then rotate them for something else next time. Make sure you wash all produce to eliminate pesticide residues and cut off the peel of fruits and vegetables as they have waxes and pesticides you can't wash off. The time from feeding insects, to your reptile eating those insects, should be 6-24 hours, and gutloading must be done before every feeding to be successful.

Staple Insect Gutloading Ingredients (Highest in calcium and other nutrients)					
 Collard Greens	 Turnip Greens	 Mustard Greens	 Escarole	 Endive	 Dandelion

Good Insect Gutloading Ingredients (Use as supplements to staples listed above)					
 Sweet Potato	 Papaya	 Kale	 Butternut Squash	 Berries	 Mango
Commercial gutloads: Repashy Superload, Cricket Crack, Super Chow					

Avoid These Ingredients (Low in calcium and/or high in phosphorus, oxalates, goitrogens)
Idaho potatoes, cabbage, iceberg lettuce, spinach, broccoli, tomatoes, corn, grains, beans, bread, cereal, meat, eggs, dog food, cat food, fish food, canned or dried insects, vertebrates (pinkies, lizards). While convenient, some commercially available gutloads (Farms Orange Cubes, Fluker Farms High Calcium Cricket Diet, Nature Zone Cricket Bites) are low in calcium, imbalanced and/or insufficient for good nutrition.

Supplementation
A powdered calcium supplement (without phosphorus) should be used lightly sprinkled over the food 1-2 times weekly for adults and with every feeding for babies and juveniles. A multivitamin can be used less frequently (once or twice a month) if desired but with good nutrition this is not always necessary.

Brumation
Pacman frogs can enter a state of brumation if they are kept too cool or dry. If they dry out too much they can even get a tough dry layer of skin and appear dead but if rehydrated they will shed this tough layer and often eat it. Brumation is not necessary nor recommended due to possible complications.