



CUBAN TREE FROG (*OSTEOPILUS SEPTENTRIONALIS*) - Care Sheet

Cuban tree frogs are common in the North American pet store industry. They are considered to be an invasive species in Florida, originally introduced by stowaways on produce boats. They have had a large impact on other Florida amphibians because they often are more adaptable than the native species. They have a big appetite and can eat other frogs. In addition to those advantages, Cuban tree frogs are also poisonous and have few predators. Their adaptability and large appetite, although disadvantages for the native wildlife of Florida, are good qualities for a captive amphibian, and they can make excellent pet. It is imperative that those who live in a climate that could potentially sustain a population of Cuban tree frogs act responsibly while keeping them. Do not allow pets to be released or escape into the environment.

Species logistics: Cuban tree frogs are the largest tree frog found in North America. Females can grow to almost 6 inches (15 cm) in length, while males generally stay a bit smaller. Like many other tree frog species, Cuban tree frogs have the ability to change color depending on their surroundings. Most can change from a solid bright white to a dark chocolate brown. Some frogs can even turn dark green. They are nocturnal animals and are rarely active during the day unless there is food around or they are disturbed.

Enclosure: Being as these frogs are nocturnal, they are very active at night and will use all of the room provided to them. A 20 gallon tall aquarium that measures 20 inches long by 24 inches high by 10 inches wide (50 cm by 61 cm by 25 cm) is large enough for two or three adult frogs, although more room is better. A secure screen cover is essential because Cuban tree frogs are excellent climbers and escape artists, like most tree frogs.

The substrate in the cage can be coconut husk fiber (bed-a-beast, eco earth, forest bed, etc.), sphagnum moss, or moist paper towels. Large branching pieces of driftwood or ghost wood can be positioned at an angle to provide perches. Cuban tree frogs are arboreal so they spend most of their time positioned higher in the cage. Artificial or live plants can be draped around these perches to provide shelter or live plants can be provided to also provide humidity.



Climate: Cuban tree frogs are tolerant of a wide range of temperatures which is one reason why they make good pets. The ideal temperature during the day can range from 78°F to 88°F (26°C to 31°C), with night temperatures averaging around 65°F to 70°F (18°C to 21°C). A small infra-red incandescent reptile heat bulb can be positioned over part of the cage for warming, if necessary.

The humidity can remain between (60%-90%) during most of the year being as these frogs are native to tropical climates. A daily misting will keep the humidity high enough. Plastic wrap or glass can be placed over part of the screen section of the cover to lower the amount of water that evaporates from the cage if the humidity falls too low. Just be sure to allow some air flow or the cage will become stagnant.

Water: A large bowl of clean water should be available at all times. Like most all frogs they will soak in it periodically throughout the night. The water should be changed every day or when it appears dirty. If tap water is used, make sure to treat it with tap water conditioner to remove all of the chlorine, chloramines, and heavy metals. Bottled spring water can be used instead of tap water.

Food: These frogs are not finicky eaters. They will eat just about any moving creature in the cage that can fit into their mouth. Crickets can make up the majority of their diet. Other food items such as wax worms, moths, earth worms, house flies, silkworms, roaches, and more can be offered instead of crickets every few feedings. PHoenix worms are another great options as they can contain up to 8000 percent of the frog's daily calcium. Adult Cuban tree frogs can be fed two to five food items every two to three days. Juvenile frogs should be fed daily. Adults should have their food coated with a reptile vitamin and/or calcium powder once every two to four feedings. Juveniles should have their food lightly dusted each feeding with a one day a week break from supplementation.