

WHITE'S TREE FROG

Phylum: Chordata Class: Lissamphibia Order: Anura Family: Hylidae
Litoria caerulea

Description: The frog is usually jade-green with a whitish underside, but there have been frogs which display shades of blue, and rarely, some have been completely blue. Occasionally it will change colors to brown, and sometimes it will also have some little white spots all over its body.

Length: Males 4 inches, females 5 inches

Lifespan: 15-20 years in captivity

Habitat: Near homes, around water tanks and cisterns or in rainforests

Range: Northeast Australia, New Guinea, Indonesia and the Torres Straits



Status: Not threatened but the destruction of the ozone has played a major role in the depletion of these tiny animals, along with many others. Their skin is very sensitive to the UV radiation.

Diet in the Wild: Large insects

Special Features:

- The skin is covered with a thick cuticle that allows it to retain moisture. During the dry season they cover themselves in a cocoon of sloughed epidermis and mucus and burrow to keep moist.
- Eye has a horizontal pupil whereas other hylids tend to have a vertical pupil.
- Its rolling skin folds of fatty material have also brought about nicknames like "Dumpy Tree Frog" and "Smiling Frog."
- A White's Tree Frog's weight can be tracked by checking the state of the arches (*like eyebrows!*) over the frog's eardrums. These arches are called tympanic ridges.
- A very calm frog.
- Nocturnal and arboreal.
- They have sticky pads on their broad toes to help them climb on slippery leaves or smooth surfaces.
- Frogs can extend their tongue well beyond the mouth because it is attached at the front of the mouth and flips forward. Their tongues have a sticky area on the lower surface which is pressed against glands in the roof of the mouth which produce an adhesive secretion. These adaptations help them catch their prey.

Breeding/Care of Young:

- Sexually mature at 1 year old.
- Mating season November through February.
- During the mating season males grow a black pad on their thumb to help in gripping the females.
- The female will lay 200-2000 eggs which will sink to the bottom of the water.
- Eggs take about one to three days to hatch and metamorphosis can occur in two to three weeks.

Scientists have discovered that skin secretions from this animal can destroy the *Staphylococcus* bacterium that is responsible for acne, boils, and other infections.

