

# Giant Waxy Tree Frog

**Scientific Name:** *Dendrobates azureus*

**Class:** Amphibia

**Order:** Anura

**Family:** Dendrobatidae



The frog has a slim body with a rounded snout. They have slender legs and their toes and fingers have small adhesive discs used for climbing when necessary. The Giant Waxy Tree Frog is less than two inches long. It has no teeth. Colored bright blue with black dots on its back and a light blue stomach, this frog alerts potential predators that its skin holds a poisonous liquid, unpleasant to the taste. The alkaloid poisons in the skin are capable of paralyzing, and even killing, predators. They have four toes per foot, each with a wide, flattened tip and a suction cup pad to help grip. Males and females appear quite similar.

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## Range

South America: The Sipaliwini savannah of southern Surinam near the border with Brazil

## Habitat

Drier forest islands within the rain forest near smaller streams

## Gestation

After incubation they become tadpoles in about 18 days and change into frogs 10 to 12 weeks later through metamorphosis

## Litter

Clutch size: Four to six 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. These frogs are solitary except for fighting and breeding. They are territorial and will dispute their territory by having “wrestling matches.”

## Reproduction

Mating is done during the rainy season by amplexus, in which the male clasps the female while she lays her four to six eggs. He fertilizes these immediately after they are expelled before the jelly that surrounds them swells. All eggs are laid on the ground and are guarded by the parents until they become larvae. The male then attaches the larvae to his back by a mucous secretion and carries them to a small pool of water. Here they develop into tadpoles and eventually into frogs through metamorphosis. (Females have been observed fighting aggressively over males, the winner then begins the courtship.)

## Wild Diet

Ants, termites and other small arthropods (spiders, insects)