## **YVCipedia AMPHIBIAN**

American Green Tree Frog Care Sheet

## **Species Overview**

The **American Green Tree Frog (*Hyla cinerea*)** is a **small, nocturnal, arboreal amphibian** native to the southeastern United States. Well-known for their **bright green coloration**, white or yellow lateral stripe, and loud nighttime calls, they are common in the wild and increasingly popular in the pet trade.

These frogs are **hardy, attractive, and easy to keep in small groups**, making them a good choice for beginners ready to maintain **basic amphibian needs**, especially humidity and clean water. Adults typically reach **1.5–2.5 inches** in length and can live **5–8 years** with proper care.

## **Housing & Environment**

American Green Tree Frogs are **arboreal** and require **tall enclosures** with plenty of climbing space and dense cover.

**Minimum enclosure size:**

* Single adult or small group: **12×12×18 inches** (tall-style terrarium)
* Larger enclosures recommended for groups to reduce stress

**Key enclosure features:**

* Escape-proof, ventilated doors or lids (they’re excellent climbers)
* Vertical branches, bamboo, or cork bark for climbing
* Live or artificial plants for security and humidity retention
* Multiple secure hides among foliage

**Recommended substrates:**

* Coconut fiber or cypress mulch for humidity retention
* Paper towels for simple, low-risk cleaning (especially in quarantine)
* Sphagnum moss in hides for added humidity

**Cleaning guidelines:**

* Spot-clean feces daily or as needed
* Replace substrate and disinfect enclosure monthly or more often if required

## **Heating & Lighting**

American Green Tree Frogs thrive in **warm, stable temperatures** without excessive heat.

**Temperature range:**

* **Daytime:** 75–82°F
* **Nighttime:** Can drop to ~65–72°F
* Avoid sustained temperatures above 85°F, which can stress or harm them

**Heating:**

* Low-wattage ceramic heat emitter or radiant heat panel for gentle warmth
* Side-mounted heat mats (thermostat-controlled) if necessary
* Always use **thermostats** to prevent overheating

**Lighting:**

* No high-intensity lighting needed; frogs are **nocturnal**
* **Low-level UVB (2–5%) is optional but beneficial** for calcium metabolism and overall health
* Provide a **12-hour light/dark cycle** with timers to maintain natural rhythms

## **Humidity**

These frogs require **moderate to high humidity** levels between **50–80%**, with **higher spikes after misting**.

**Humidity management tips:**

* Mist the enclosure once or twice daily, especially in the evening
* Provide live or artificial plants to hold moisture
* Include humid hides with damp sphagnum moss
* Use **digital hygrometers** for accuracy
* Ensure good ventilation to prevent mold or bacterial buildup

Proper humidity supports **healthy skin and shedding**.

## **Water & Hydration**

American Green Tree Frogs **absorb water through their skin and cloaca**, so maintaining **clean, dechlorinated water** is essential.

**Water guidelines:**

* Provide a **shallow, stable water dish** large enough for soaking
* Change water daily to avoid bacterial growth
* Always use **dechlorinated or treated water**
* Mist daily to provide droplets they’ll lick from leaves and enclosure surfaces

## **Diet & Feeding**

American Green Tree Frogs are **insectivores**, feeding on a variety of small invertebrates.

**Feeding guidelines:**

* Juveniles: Feed **daily**
* Adults: Feed **every 2–3 days**

**Appropriate prey items:**

* Gut-loaded crickets
* Small Dubia roaches
* Black soldier fly larvae
* Flightless fruit flies (for smaller frogs)
* Occasional waxworms (treat only—high fat)

**Feeding tips:**

* Prey size should be **no larger than the width between the frog’s eyes**
* Dust insects with **calcium (with D3) 2–3× weekly**
* Use a **multivitamin supplement 1× weekly**
* Remove uneaten insects to avoid stress and enclosure fouling

## **Behavior & Handling**

American Green Tree Frogs are **nocturnal, shy, and delicate-skinned**. While they’re often **less stressed than some tropical frogs**, they **still prefer minimal handling**.

**Handling recommendations:**

* Limit handling to reduce stress and avoid damaging sensitive skin
* Always **wet hands with dechlorinated water** before contact
* Gently support the frog, avoiding squeezing
* Watch for **jumps** if startled

Handling should be **occasional and gentle** to maintain the frog’s health and reduce stress.

## **Healthcare & Veterinary Care**

Plan for an **initial veterinary exam** after acquisition and **annual wellness checkups** with a veterinarian experienced in amphibian medicine.

**Common health issues:**

* Skin infections from poor hygiene or low humidity
* Shedding problems (dysecdysis)
* Parasites (especially in wild-caught frogs)
* Nutritional metabolic bone disease (from inadequate supplementation)
* Obesity from overfeeding fatty prey

**Warning signs:**

* Lethargy or weakness
* Persistent refusal to eat
* Abnormal skin color, lesions, or sores
* Difficulty shedding
* Bloating or open-mouth breathing

Prompt veterinary care helps **prevent serious complications** and supports **long-term health**.

## **Enrichment & Habitat Design**

American Green Tree Frogs **thrive in lush, naturalistic enclosures** with vertical climbing space and dense cover.

**Enrichment strategies:**

* Multiple vertical branches and cork bark
* Dense live or artificial plants for hiding and security
* Moist hides with damp moss
* Varied textures and climbing opportunities
* Rearrange décor occasionally to stimulate exploration

A thoughtfully designed enclosure reduces **stress** and promotes **natural behaviors**.

## **Facts & FAQs**

* Named for their **bright green color** and slender build.
* Native to **southeastern U.S. wetlands and forests**, often found on reeds and grasses near water.
* Known for **loud, distinctive “quonking” calls**, especially at night.
* Nocturnal and **sit-and-wait predators** of small insects.
* Lifespan of **5–8 years** in captivity with good care.

### **Supplies & Care Checklist**

* Tall, escape-proof terrarium (≥12×12×18 inches minimum)
* Ceramic heat emitter or radiant panel (thermostat-controlled)
* Digital thermometers and hygrometer
* Low-level UVB light (2–5%, optional but beneficial)
* Multiple vertical branches and cork bark
* Live or artificial plants for cover and humidity retention
* Moist hides with sphagnum moss
* Appropriate substrate (coconut fiber, cypress mulch, paper towels)
* Misting system or spray bottle
* Shallow, stable water dish with dechlorinated water
* Feeding tongs for safe insect offering
* Gut-loaded feeder insects
* Calcium and multivitamin supplements
* Cleaning supplies and amphibian-safe disinfectants
* Secure carrier for veterinary visits

*Yarmouth Veterinary Center*