**YVCipedia AMPHIBIAN**

Fire-Bellied Toad Care Sheet

## **Species Overview**

The **Fire-Bellied Toad (*Bombina orientalis*)** is a small, semi-aquatic amphibian native to China, Korea, and Russia. Despite the name, they are frogs by taxonomy, but commonly known as "toads" due to their bumpy skin. Their vibrant green-and-black dorsal coloring contrasts with a striking red or orange belly—a warning signal to predators that they secrete mild toxins from their skin.

These amphibians are hardy, easy to care for with the right environment, and make good beginner amphibians for responsible keepers. They typically grow to **1.5–2.5 inches long** and can live **10–15 years** in captivity.

## **Housing & Environment**

Fire-bellied toads thrive in **semi-aquatic setups** that provide both swimming and land areas. They do best in groups of 2–4, provided adequate space is available.

### **Enclosure Guidelines**

* **Minimum tank size:** 10 gallons for 1–2 toads; 20+ gallons for groups
* Use an **aquatic-terrestrial split** (paludarium or “turtle tank” style)
* Water depth: 2–4 inches with smooth slope or floating platforms for land access
* Provide hiding spots: driftwood, plants, cork bark, or plastic caves
* Use a secure lid—these toads can jump

### **Substrate**

* **Aquatic section:** smooth gravel, large river rocks, or bare-bottom
* **Land area:** coconut fiber, moss, or smooth river stones
* Avoid small loose gravel that could be ingested

Clean waste and uneaten food daily; partial water changes weekly.

## **Heating, Lighting & Humidity**

Fire-bellied toads are **cool-climate amphibians** and generally do not require additional heat in most indoor environments.

### **Temperature**

* **Ideal range:** 68–75°F
* **Do not exceed:** 78°F
* Avoid basking bulbs or heaters unless ambient temps fall below 65°F

### **Lighting**

* UVB lighting is **optional** but may benefit long-term health and support a natural day-night cycle
* Use low-output UVB (5.0 or lower) or LED lighting on a 12-hour timer

### **Humidity**

* Maintain ambient humidity between **50–70%**
* Mist lightly as needed, but do not keep terrestrial areas constantly wet
* Use a hygrometer to monitor humidity

## **Diet & Feeding**

Fire-bellied toads are insectivores that eat small, live prey.

### **Feeding Guidelines**

* Feed adults 3–4 times per week
* Juveniles may require feeding every other day
* Offer only as much as they’ll consume in 15–20 minutes

### **Common Feeder Items**

* Small crickets (gut-loaded)
* Black soldier fly larvae
* Fruit flies (flightless)
* Bloodworms or blackworms (for aquatic feeding)
* Occasional earthworm segments (chopped)

Dust prey with a calcium supplement **1–2 times per week** and a multivitamin **once weekly**.

## **Behavior & Handling**

Fire-bellied toads are **active and vocal**, often making quiet barking or chirping sounds. They are best kept as **observational pets**.

* Avoid handling—skin is delicate and secretes mild toxins
* If handling is necessary, **wear powder-free gloves** and rinse thoroughly
* Wash hands thoroughly after any contact or enclosure cleaning

They are **social animals** and may do well in groups, but avoid overcrowding and monitor for aggression during feeding.

## **Health & Veterinary Care**

These toads are generally hardy, but like all amphibians, they are sensitive to environmental toxins, poor water quality, and incorrect humidity.

### **Common Health Issues**

* Red leg syndrome (bacterial infection)
* Fungal skin infections
* Skin shedding problems
* Parasites (more common in wild-caught individuals)
* Toxin exposure from untreated water or chemicals

### **Signs of Illness**

* Lethargy or floating listlessly
* Refusal to eat
* Discoloration or lesions on skin
* Labored breathing or swollen body
* Incomplete shedding

Annual exams with a reptile/amphibian veterinarian are recommended. Always use **dechlorinated water**—chlorine or chloramines can cause immediate harm.

## **Enrichment**

Though simple in needs, fire-bellied toads benefit from habitat changes and environmental stimulation.

### **Enrichment Ideas**

* Rearranging décor
* Adding aquatic plants or floating platforms
* Offering food in different areas or with feeding tongs
* Providing shaded and open basking zones

## **Facts & FAQs**

* Fire-bellied toads secrete toxins from their skin—avoid contact with eyes or mouth
* Their red/orange belly is a warning to predators (aposematic coloration)
* These toads are more **active during the day** than many amphibians
* Males may call quietly and perform “foot waving” when courting
* They are **not compatible with other amphibians or fish**—keep only with their own kind

## **Supplies Checklist**

* 10–20 gallon tank with secure lid
* Water conditioner or dechlorinator
* Partial aquatic setup (land and water access)
* Filter (gentle flow) or regular water change schedule
* Shallow water and land hides
* Thermometer and hygrometer
* Calcium and vitamin supplement powders
* Small, live insect feeders
* Safe cleaning supplies
* Powder-free gloves (for safe handling)
* Secure container for vet visits

*Yarmouth Veterinary Center*