## **YVCipedia AMPHIBIAN**

White's Tree Frog Care Sheet

## **Species Overview**

**White’s Tree Frogs (*Litoria caerulea*)** are **medium-sized, nocturnal, arboreal amphibians** native to Australia and New Guinea. They are well known for their **calm temperament**, adorable **“smiling” faces**, and tolerance for **a wider range of conditions** than many other tree frogs.

They are popular in the pet trade for being **hardy, forgiving of minor mistakes, and easy to observe** in captivity. Adults typically reach **3–5 inches long** and can live **10–20+ years** in captivity with excellent care.

## **Housing & Environment**

White’s Tree Frogs are **arboreal**, needing **tall enclosures** with plenty of vertical climbing opportunities and hiding places.

**Minimum enclosure size:**

* Single adult: 18×18×24 inches (tall-style terrarium)
* Pairs or groups: 24×18×24 inches or larger
* Bigger enclosures are always better for enrichment

**Key enclosure features:**

* Escape-proof lid or doors (they are agile climbers)
* Multiple sturdy climbing branches and cork bark
* Artificial or live plants for cover
* Secure hides at various heights

**Recommended substrates:**

* Coconut husk fiber or cypress mulch to hold humidity
* Sphagnum moss in humid hides
* Paper towels for simple cleaning (especially in quarantine)

**Cleaning guidelines:**

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

## **Heating & Lighting**

White’s Tree Frogs are **tropical amphibians** that need a **warm, stable environment**.

**Temperature range:**

* **Daytime:** 75–82°F
* **Nighttime:** Can drop to ~65–72°F safely
* Avoid prolonged temps over 85°F

**Heating:**

* Low-wattage ceramic heat emitters or radiant heat panels for gentle warmth
* Side-mounted heat mats (thermostat-controlled) for larger enclosures
* Always use **thermostats** to avoid overheating

**Lighting:**

* No UVB required, but **low-level UVB (2–5%) is beneficial** for calcium metabolism and overall health
* Provide a **12-hour light/dark cycle** with timers

## **Humidity**

White’s Tree Frogs thrive in **moderate to high humidity** levels around **50–70%**, with **occasional spikes up to 80%** during misting.

**Humidity management tips:**

* Mist the enclosure once or twice daily
* Use live plants to help maintain humidity
* Provide humid hides with damp sphagnum moss
* Use **digital hygrometers** to monitor humidity
* Ensure ventilation to prevent mold and bacterial growth

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

## **Water & Hydration**

These frogs **absorb water through their skin and cloaca** and require consistently **clean, dechlorinated water**.

**Water guidelines:**

* Provide a **shallow water dish** large enough for soaking
* Change water daily to prevent bacterial contamination
* Use **dechlorinated or treated water**
* Mist daily to maintain skin hydration and encourage natural drinking behavior

## **Diet & Feeding**

White’s Tree Frogs are **opportunistic, insectivorous predators** that can easily become overweight if overfed.

**Feeding guidelines:**

* Juveniles: Feed **daily or every other day**
* Adults: Feed **2–3 times per week**

**Appropriate prey items:**

* Gut-loaded crickets
* Dubia roaches
* Black soldier fly larvae
* Occasional waxworms or superworms (treat only—high in fat)

**Feeding tips:**

* Prey should be **appropriately sized** (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 live insects after feeding to prevent biting or stressing the frog

Avoid overfeeding—**obesity is common** in this species.

## **Behavior & Handling**

White’s Tree Frogs are known for their **generally calm, even “tame” behavior** compared to other tree frogs.

**Handling recommendations:**

* Limit handling to reduce stress and avoid damaging sensitive skin
* Always **wet hands with dechlorinated water** before contact
* Support the frog gently, avoiding squeezing or restraining too tightly
* Wash hands thoroughly before and after handling to protect both the frog and yourself

Though calmer than many amphibians, they **still prefer minimal handling**.

## **Healthcare & Veterinary Care**

Plan for an **initial veterinary exam** soon after acquisition and **annual wellness visits** with an exotics-savvy veterinarian.

**Common health issues:**

* Skin infections from poor hygiene or low humidity
* Shedding problems (dysecdysis)
* Obesity from overfeeding
* Parasites (especially in wild-caught individuals)
* Nutritional metabolic bone disease (from poor diet or lack of supplementation)

**Warning signs:**

* Loss of appetite
* Lethargy or weakness
* Abnormal skin lesions or discoloration
* Difficulty shedding
* Bloated appearance or open-mouth breathing

Prompt veterinary care can **prevent complications** and improve outcomes.

## **Enrichment & Habitat Design**

White’s Tree Frogs **thrive in naturalistic, enriched enclosures** with plenty of vertical structure and cover.

**Enrichment strategies:**

* Multiple sturdy branches and cork bark for climbing
* Secure hides at different heights
* Live or artificial plants for cover and humidity retention
* Moist hides with damp moss for shedding support
* Varied textures and décor rearranged occasionally to encourage exploration

A well-designed environment **reduces stress** and encourages **natural behaviors**.

## **Facts & FAQs**

* Also known as **“Dumpy Tree Frogs”** due to their chubby appearance.
* Native to **Australia and New Guinea**, inhabiting warm, humid forests.
* Nocturnal and **opportunistic feeders** with a strong feeding response.
* Known for their **docile nature**—one of the easiest tree frogs to keep.
* Lifespan of **10–20+ years** in captivity with proper care.

### **Supplies & Care Checklist**

* Escape-proof tall terrarium (≥18×18×24 inches for adults)
* Ceramic heat emitter or radiant panel (thermostat-controlled)
* Digital thermometers and hygrometer
* Low-level UVB light (optional but beneficial)
* Multiple climbing branches and cork bark
* Live or artificial plants for cover and humidity
* Moist hides with sphagnum moss
* Appropriate substrate (coconut husk, cypress mulch, paper)
* 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*