

# Tomato Frog

*Dyscophus guineti*



(Left) Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons<sup>6</sup>  
(Right) Photo courtesy of University of California<sup>4</sup>

**Relatives:** Class: Amphibia<sup>3</sup>

Order: Anura (Frogs and toads)<sup>3</sup>

Family: Microhylidae (Microhylid Frogs)<sup>3</sup>

Genus: *Dyscophus*

**Description:** Yellowish in males and red-orange in females. Most all have a dark marking on the sides. No webbing on hands and very little on feet. Round and flattened a bit. Belly is whitish-yellowish, sometimes having dark spots on the belly. Juveniles can be confused with other Tomato Frogs. <sup>1</sup> Belly varies from white to yellow sometimes having spots. Very similar species is the *Dyscophus antongilii*, but they do not have the dark banding on the sides. Females are one third larger than males and have a wider head. <sup>5</sup>

**Size:** Males reach 60-65 mm (2.3-2.5 inches); Females reach 90-95 mm (3.5-3.75 inches) <sup>1,5</sup>

**Habitat:** It is usually found in primary rainforest and swamp forests and in clearings and poorly drained places adjacent to or within forest. It is not found in severely degraded habitats. It breeds in temporary and permanent pools. <sup>3</sup> They live 150-900 meters above sea level. <sup>5</sup>

**Range:** Eastern rainforest belt of Madagascar – 150-900 meters above sea level)<sup>3</sup>  
Range Map:  
[http://mapservices.iucnredlist.org/IUCN/mapper/index.html?ID\\_NO=57805](http://mapservices.iucnredlist.org/IUCN/mapper/index.html?ID_NO=57805)<sup>3</sup>

**Life Span:** 8-10 years<sup>5</sup>

**Predators:** Any large mammal, bird or reptile living in the rainforest on the east coast Madagascar.<sup>2</sup>

**Diet/Prey:** Insects, worms, spiders and even small vertebrates such as their own offspring.<sup>5</sup>

**Aquarium Diet:** Crickets

**Reproduction:** Tomato frogs mature at 9-14 months, and lay 1,000-1,500 eggs. During reproduction, they look for ponds, marshes, seasonally flooded or streams with

little current. The implementation consists of hundreds of eggs sticky that they deposited on the surface of the water or attached to underwater vegetation. The tadpoles are similar to the other species of tomato and are 27-45 mm at the end of its development.<sup>5</sup>

- Fun Facts:**
- The word guineti comes from the French merchant M. Guinet who was from Sambava, North of Madagascar.<sup>5</sup>
  - When they feel threatened, the tomato frog swells its body for protections. If that doesn't work, and they are caught, they secrete a white and sticky material to the mucous membranes that penetrates the mouth of the predator, which is usually instantly effective. This mucus could stay in the predator's mouth for a few days. The toxin could be aggravating to humans but not potent.<sup>4,5</sup>
  - *Dyscophus guineti* are sufficient reproducers and are so prevalent in zoos and aquariums.<sup>5</sup>

**Ecology:** Unknown

- Conservation Connection:** Possible reasons for amphibian decline<sup>1</sup>
- General habitat alteration and loss
  - Habitat modification from deforestation, or logging
  - Intensified agriculture or grazing
  - Urbanization
  - Subtle changes to necessary specialized habitat
  - Invasive Species
  - Over-harvesting, pet trade or collecting

The Tomato Frog's forest habitat is receding due to agriculture, timbering, charcoal production, and invasive spread of eucalyptus, livestock foraging and human development. It is exploited commercially, but not yet to the degree that it would affect populations. This exploitation results largely from the placement of its sister species, *Dyscophus antongili* (the Tomato Frog).<sup>3</sup>

**Status:** Least Concern. It seems to be able to change according to its habitat, it is in a few different locations in the rainforest and it has a large population.<sup>3</sup>

**Aliases:** False Tomato Frog, Tomato Frog<sup>5</sup>

- References:**
1. AmphibiaWeb. *Dyscophus guineti*.  
[http://amphibiaweb.org/cgi/amphib\\_query?where-genus=Dyscophus&where-species=guineti](http://amphibiaweb.org/cgi/amphib_query?where-genus=Dyscophus&where-species=guineti)
  2. Eric Fann, Herpetologist and Senior Biologist at the SC Aquarium

3. The ICUN Red List of Threatened Species. *Dyscophus guineti*.  
<http://www.iucnredlist.org/apps/redlist/details/57805/0>
4. University of California. *Dyscophus guineti*.  
[http://calphotos.berkeley.edu/cgi/img\\_query?seq\\_num=122810&one=T](http://calphotos.berkeley.edu/cgi/img_query?seq_num=122810&one=T)
5. Wesapiens. *False Tomato Frog (Dyscophus guineti == Kalula guineti)*  
*Grandidier, 1875*  
[http://www.wesapiens.org/file/1751001/False+Tomato+Frog+\(Dyscophus+guineti+%3D%3D+Kalula+guineti\)+Grandidier,+1875](http://www.wesapiens.org/file/1751001/False+Tomato+Frog+(Dyscophus+guineti+%3D%3D+Kalula+guineti)+Grandidier,+1875)
6. Wikimedia Commons. *Dyscophus guineti*.  
[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Dyscophus\\_guineti](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Dyscophus_guineti)