



## Vietnamese Mossy Frog

Kingdom: Animalia  
 Phylum: Chordata  
 Subphylum: Vertebrata  
 Class: Amphibia  
 Order: Anura  
 Family: Rhacophoridae  
 Genus: *Theioderma*  
 Species: *corticale*



Photo courtesy of Karen Marzynski

### Habitat

- **In the Wild:** Vietnamese mossy frogs are found in flooded caves and on the banks of mountain streams of northern Vietnam. Elevation of about 3,000 feet.
- **Exhibit Location:** Zoo to You Collection

### Characteristics

- Length: 2.5-3.5 inches  
Females are slightly larger than males.
- The color and texture of their skin looks like a clump of moss. The green skin, having black spots and stains, is provided with many tubercles (wart-like growths) and spines. Therefore, it can be quite impossible to see a calmly sitting frog (allocryptic coloration).
- They have large eyes, giving them a broad range of vision.
- Their toes have an adhesive disk at the end of each digit, making them skillful tree climbers.
- **Lifespan: In the Wild** Unknown ; **In Captivity** 12-15 years

### Behaviors

- Vietnamese mossy frogs are nocturnal (active at night).
- This is a semi-aquatic species spending much of the time hiding in the water under rocks and floating plants. It will also attach itself to the crevice on a rock, just above the water, appearing to be moss.
- If threatened, it will curl into a ball, possibly in an attempt to appear even less like an edible frog.
- **Enrichments at the Zoo:** new furniture and vegetation

### Reproduction

- Vietnamese mossy frogs breed from April to June.
- They breed usually in rock cavities with accumulated still water at their floor. They have also been observed breeding in tree holes.
- Small masses of eggs are attached to rocks or vegetation just above water to protect them from predators.
- The eggs hatch in 7-14 days and the larvae fall into the water directly below.
- Metamorphosis from tadpole to a frog takes about 1 year.

### Diet

- **In the Wild:** insects, small invertebrates
- **At the Zoo:** crickets

## Conservation Status

- **IUCN status:** Data Deficient; **CITES Appendix:** not listed
- It is suggested that the species may be locally common. Forest damage, however, continues to be significant. Clear cutting has reduced the available habitat to this species. This is one of the few regional frog species for which there is also a specific demand in the global pet trade.
- The Vietnamese government protects Vietnamese mossy tree frogs.
- Predators: fish, snakes, humans

## Did You Know?/Fun Facts

- Vietnamese mossy tree frogs are also known as “Tonkin bug-eyed frogs.”
- They are known to be ventriloquists, as they can “throw” their voices.
- A frog has no hard palate (hard part of the roof of the mouth behind the front teeth). To swallow food, it pulls its eyes down into the roof of its mouth which helps push food down its throat.
- Frogs were the first creatures to have vocal cords.
- Their camouflage is the most elaborate in the animal kingdom.

## Sources:

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