

July/August 2005

Welcome to the first edition of Dartfrog 'News'

Apologies to those who we told quite some time ago that this would be available soon. Unfortunately due to various business commitments 'soon' has taken about 8 months. Anyway here it is!

The purpose of this bi-monthly newsletter is to inform the amphibian keeping community of new products, plant species, books, artwork along with our amphibian breeding successes and subsequent availability. We travel to many shows throughout Europe in each calendar year and sometimes we bring back and offer species that would otherwise rarely if ever be available in the UK. We will also offer existing customers the chance to purchase certain products at reduced prices.

Finally we also intend to feature products (new or old), offer book reviews, care sheets, equipment testing, hints, tips and detailed information on amphibian species that we have ourselves has the opportunity to successfully keep (as well as inform you of those species we consider difficult or unable to adapt to normal captive conditions). So, please read on.....

**Our first "Amphibian of the month"
The ringed salamander (*Ambystoma annulatum*)**



It is not often that a secretive caudate species can match a poison dart frog for pure beauty but one species is surely giving these jewels a run for their money. We have been attempting to breed for over 5 years and did just that last October (2004). Typically the ringed salamander (***Ambystoma annulatum***) of the Ozark region of central Missouri, central and western

Arkansas, and eastern Oklahoma, USA breeds when the first heavy rains of Autumn. So after failed attempts at breeding this species in an aquarium, we decided to move our 2:2 adults into a greenhouse setup. The greenhouse possesses a naturalistic environment with lots of mossy banks, ferns, burrows and small ornamental reeds and is shaded from the midday and afternoon sun by an ancient oak tree. An old fibreglass bath has been sunk in the grown towards one end and this has been filled with lots of granite rock to give easy egression from the water. This pond is heavily planted with *Elodea densa* and *Myriophyllum*. Hose pipes lead from both the outside gutters through into the greenhouse so that when it rains outside it get wet inside too and we believe that this was the most important trigger (along with temperature and reduced photoperiod). We first noticed all 4 adults had entered the water by late September by shining a

torch into the bath at night. Barely a week later 2 large tennis ball sized clumps of spawn and over a dozen small clumps were attached to the pond weed just under the water surface. An estimate for the total number of eggs was 170 – 200. These were left in situ for 2 months at which point there was a definite behavioural pattern – eat or be eaten and so a decision was made to remove approximately 70 larvae to another spare fibreglass bath, filled with around 18 inches of water with the same granite rocks, a layer of dead oak and maple leaves and Canadian pondweed. This was located in a shaded area where the water temperature stayed below 70°F (21°C) even during the high 80's we experienced this summer. The larvae were intensively fed with daphnia, tubifex worm, Asellus crustaceans, bloodworm and small earthworms.

The first salamanders started metamorphosing in mid-July and emerged at 4 – 5cm and were a rather dull grey-brown colour. The striking adult colours begin to surface very quickly after 10 – 14 days. We now have a small number of these salamanders available if anyone is interested. See the website www.dartfrog.co.uk for details.

Equipment News



It gives us great pleasure to finally offer the professional aluminium profiling as seen in many Dutch and German amphibian collections. Although relatively expensive we feel that the aesthetic neatness and practically far outweigh the cost. From a single vivarium as shown above to a multilayered rack holding dozens of vivaria, aluminium profiling can quickly be constructed to fit any room, shelf or alcove. The hollow rectangular aluminium sections are extremely flexible, easy to cut to size and very strong. Joining the individual sections is easy with the numerous nylon connector configurations and to finish off the set up, black PVC foam panels can be inserted to mask the sides and top panels and as sliding doors to hide lighting, drainage pipework, misting tubes etc. We can offer quotations for a specific vivarium or set of vivaria, or the individual parts can be purchased from our website.

New equipment

We have added quite a few items to our website this month. The list below reflects the new additions:-

- PVC drip system and individual components
- Drain Sets
- Whisper silent ventilator
- Ultrasonic Mister Burg BH840E
- Seconds timer
- Light hood packages
- Rock Effect Background Panels
- Tree-fern (xaxim) plant pot
- Tree fern root (xaxim) trunk



- Oak Wood (various pieces)
- Sumatra Driftwood
- Opuwa Wood
- Banana Root
- Desert Root
- ENT Vitamin Range (AmiVit-A, DendroVit & CollembolaVit)
- Various Vivarium Construction parts

Please view our website for further details. We will be reviewing some of these products in future newsletters. If you would like to send us your own review please feel free.

Breeding News

July & August has been our most successful months in terms of actually producing eggs. So far this month we have had eggs for the first time from our moonshine splashback poison dart frogs (*Dendrobates galactonotus*), red-headed poison dart frog (*Dendrobates fantasticus*), [Harlequin poison dart frog](#) (*Dendrobates histrionicus*), Maranon poison dart frog (*Dendrobates mysteriosus*), Zaparo's poison frog (*Epipedobates zaparo*), California climbing salamander (*Aneides lugubris*) and Himalayan mountain or mandarin salamander (*Tylototriton shanjing*). We will keep you posted on developments of all these species in the coming months and of course, any surplus will be offered for sale via our website.

European Caudate Amphibian Availability

The following c/b 2005 newt species will be available from us shortly. Please contact us for more details or pre-order:-

- Italian newt (*Lissotriton (Triturus) italicus*)
- Marbled newt (*Triturus marmoratus*)
- Pygmy marbled newt (*Triturus pygmaeus*)
- Banded newt (*Triturus vittatus ophryticus*)

Dartfrog Availability

Some poison dart frogs are often regarded as difficult to obtain (and often incorrectly difficult to keep). We have a contact in Europe who is offering us a number of superb species which we are now taking orders for. These are all legally acquired or captive bred. If you are interested in any of the species listed below, please do not hesitate to contact us as soon as possible. Numbers are limited in most instances and are on a first come first served basis. All specimens will be available from 11th October and we will require a 40% deposit for any frogs ordered around a week before this date. The frogs are as follows:-

Harlequin poison dart frog (*Dendrobates histrionicus*)

We have been offered a number of morphs of legally acquired wild-caught specimens (these have been subjected to experiments on skin toxins in a Swiss laboratory). The price is £650/pair. Not cheap but they are sexed pairs and will produce (believe me – ours lay a clutch of 7 – 14 eggs every 14 days)

- Red bull's eye, Blue & Grey and yellow bull's eye morphs.



- Hirsch morph



- Blue-spotted morph – [click here](#) for picture
- Brown, yellow spotted, red head morph – [click here](#) for picture
- Red with white leg morph (very limited numbers) – [click here](#) for picture

Vicent's poison dart frog (*Dendrobates vicentei*)

We have been offered a number of c/b adults. These are superb frogs, easy to keep and one of the egg-feeders that seem easier to breed. The price is £350/pair for the red (with little or no reticulation) and red heavily reticulated (very limited numbers) and £300/pair for the green and green reticulated.



Polka-dot poison dart frog (*Dendrobates arboreus*)

We have been offered a number of c/b adults of this egg feeder. Makes a superb vivarium subject, not at all shy and produces lots of eggs. £325/pair



Strawberry Poison dart frog (*Dendrobates pumilio*)

Probably the most familiar of the dart frogs, these superb little frogs are an absolute jewel in the vivarium. We have been offered a number of morphs (adults pairs) and are priced at £200/pair

The morphs are as follows (* in extremely limited numbers):-

- Bastimentos *
[Click here](#) for picture
- Isla Colon *
[Click here](#) for picture
- San Christobal
[Click here](#) for picture
- Darkland
[Click here](#) for picture
- Nancy



Blue Pleasing Poison frog (*Epipedobates bassleri*)

An absolutely stunning frog – we have been offered a small number of captive bred adults that should start breeding immediately (under the correct conditions). Numbers strictly limited £125 each. [Click here](#) for picture.

We will also have, amongst others, the following large juvenile c/b frogs available after from the 11th October. These are produced by our contacts in Europe. Please enquire for further details/ reserving frogs:-

- 95% Yellow splashback poison dart frog (*Dendrobates galactonotus*)
- Panguana Imitator poison dart frog (*Dendrobates imitator* 'Panguana')
- Reticulated poison dart frog (*Dendrobates reticulatus*)
- Tafelberg dyeing poison dart frog (*Dendrobates tinctorious*)
- Brazilian dyeing poison dart frog (*Dendrobates tinctorious*)
- Amazonian poison dart frog (*Dendrobates ventrimaculatus*)
- Black-legged poison dart frog (*Phyllobates bicolor* 'yellow')
- Yellow Colombian poison dart frog (*Phyllobates terribilis*)



News

If there are any species of dart frog you are interested in obtaining please email us before the 1st October and we will attempt to obtain genuine captive bred specimens for you. Serious enquiries only please.

Insect News

We are currently trialling a few new feeder insects - the green banana cockroach (*Panchlora nivea*) and the firebrat or kiln silverfish (*Thermobia domestica*). We hope to have cultures of both available in late 2005. The green banana cockroach seems to be an excellent food in its nymph stage for a number of dartfrogs and the adults are readily taken by larger species such as *Phyllobates terribilis*. Unfortunately it is quite slow to culture but once established is easy to maintain plus escapees will perish very quickly in a dry, centrally-heated room. Firebrats have been around for quite some time in the German dartfrog hobby and are curious but excellent food source. They are literally kept in a bone dry, well-ventilated container at temperatures exceeding 38°C (100.4°F), fed on standard fish flake and given a ball of cotton wool into which they lay eggs. Again these are initially slow to culture but once established will produce thousands of small firebrats and are an excellent food source.

Recently we introduced a tropical springtail called *Folosmia candida* to our list. We have discovered that this species is excellent for devouring any mould & fungal growth within the vivarium and is thoroughly recommended as a food source for newly metamorphosed dendrobatids and thumbnail species. Starter cultures and culture kits are available from our website.

Special Offer for Existing Customers

If you made a purchase over £50 from January 2004 to July 2005 from Dartfrog before we can offer you £10 off any order over £50 (not including postage) until the end of September 2005. Please email us to claim your voucher.

And Finally...

We are off to the Bocas Del Toro islands off Panama (strictly to photograph) in September. Although all equipment, vivaria, livefoods, plants etc. will be available to order from our website we will not be able to process any orders until after the 17th September. Apparently our hotel(s) in Panama have internet access so we will endeavour to answer queries every few days. Please just bear with us for these few weeks.

Next newsletter will be out sometime in October. Until then happy frogging...

Important Note: We ask you not to distribute this newsletter without our prior consent as all pictures contained within are subject to copyright laws.