



Giant Marine Toad *Bufo marinus*

Description: Giant Marine Toads have surely earned their name, weighing in on average at 2 pounds and the largest being recorded at 16 inches long! They are a large toad that is grayish brown to dark brown in color. They have stout bodies with small legs. The males are mostly smaller than the females. Like most toads, they have large parotid glands behind their eyes that can secrete a toxin if threatened.

Habitat: As their name suggests, they are found near lakes, streams, and other fresh bodies of water.

Range: They originated in South and Central America in tropical climates, even in the southern most parts of Texas. Then were introduced into Australia in 1935 to take care of a beetle problem in sugar cane fields and are now an introduced species that are well established not only in Australia but in the Pacific Islands and the Southern United States.

Natural Diet: In the wild, they will feed off small mammals, such as small mice, invertebrates, and have even been known to consume snakes and other reptiles.

Zoo Diet: At the zoo, the marine toad receive small mice and insects, like crickets and roaches.

Behavior: Marine Toads will spend their day soaking in the water or mud, being very still. When threatened, they can secrete a toxin that almost looks like milk. This is a very potent toxin and is strong enough to kill a medium sized dog when ingested. They have a low "purring" sound when vocalizing to other toads.

Reproduction: Females will start to lay eggs at 1 year of age and start with about 1000 and will increase in number as they get older, numbering up to 25,000 eggs. They will hatch to be black tadpoles that are already capable of being extremely poisonous.