

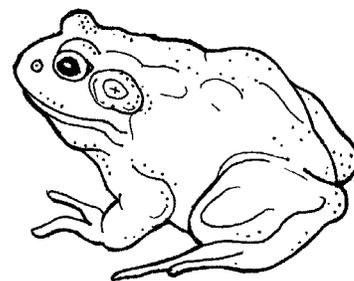


lôok around

New York City Audubon

NEW YORK CITY

Year of the Frog



©Debbie Deneman

When you imagine a pond what do you see? As you **LOOK AROUND**, do you see clear water, swaying plants, fish swimming, dragonflies and birds flying, and frogs hopping about? Imagine the sounds - water bubbling, birds chirping, insects buzzing, and the ever present "ribbet," banjo pluck, or "jug-a-rum" of frogs. Now imagine that pond without any frogs - it is just not the same!

Frogs matter - and they are important to us in so many ways. To begin with, they play a vital role in the food web. They are predators and eat many insects that can be harmful to us. Frogs are also prey, and are eaten by many other animals (including some people). The skin of many frogs has substances that help scientists create medicines and cures for diseases. And in many cultures, frogs are cherished as symbols of good luck, fertility, and transformation. Have you ever looked for a Frog Prince?

An amphibian is a creature that lives half of its life in water and the other half on land. Frogs and other amphibians (toads, salamanders, newts and wormlike caecilians) are in big trouble. Almost one half of all amphibian species around the world are in danger of becoming extinct in our lifetime. Amphibians have been around for over 360 million years. So why is this happening now?

As Kermit said, "It's not easy being green." Habitat loss, climate change, introduced species, and over-collection, have all contributed to amphibians' decline. The porous skin of amphibians helps them to drink and breathe, but also makes them sensitive to pollution and pesticides. And in the last ten years, a fungus called "amphibian chytrid" has caused the disappearance of over a dozen species of frogs. Chytrid spreads rapidly, and right now it cannot be treated in the wild. So what can be done to save amphibians?

An international organization called the Amphibian Ark is raising awareness about this crisis. 2008 was declared the Year of the Frog, and many zoos, aquariums, museums, and nature centers have hopped on board by doing research, raising funds, breeding endangered species, and spreading the word. You can get involved, too!

by Debbie Deneman

Be a Friend to Frogs and Other Amphibians

- Take care of the environment! Do not litter or pollute our local waterways.
- Leave frogs and other amphibians in the wild. Do not take them home as pets.
- Never release your pets or water plants into ponds. Introduced species (goldfish, turtles, and non-native plants) can crowd out native frogs and amphibians.
- If you go fishing, always sanitize your boots and equipment before visiting another pond.

Learn More

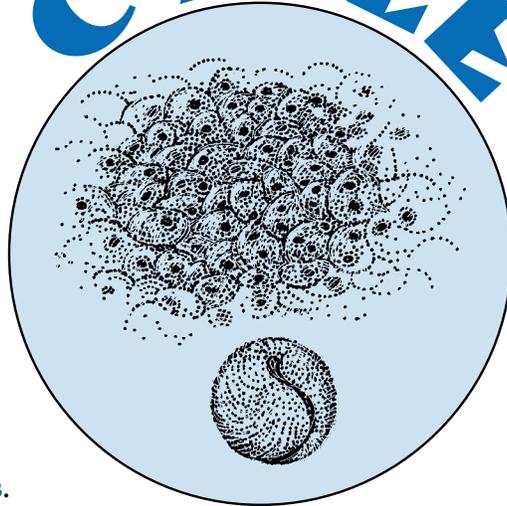
by visiting these websites:
www.amphibianark.org,
www.aza.org;
www.nwf.org/frogwatchUSA/

And spread the word about the importance of amphibians!

LOOK FOR FROG RELATED ACTIVITIES AT LOCAL ZOOS, AQUARIUMS, AND NATURE CENTERS.

FROG PROJECT: A FROG'S LIFE CYCLE

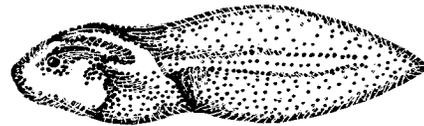
Frogs are members of a class of animals called *amphibians*. Amphibians are cold-blooded. Cold-blooded animals receive warmth from the sun and other sources of heat outside their bodies.



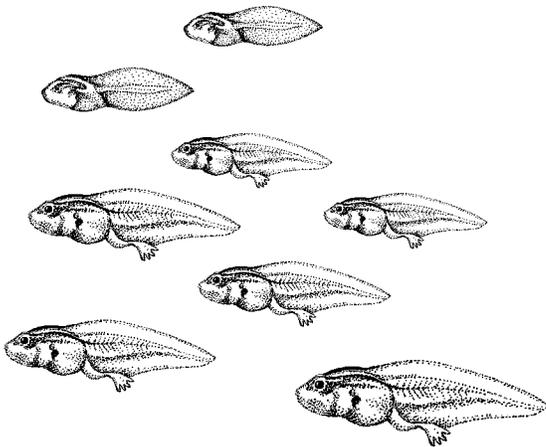
WHERE DO FROGS COME FROM?

by Stephanie Fernandez

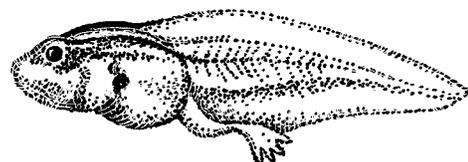
EGGS – The mother frog lays eggs in fresh water or wet places. Most frogs tend to lay many eggs at once. Thousands of eggs are laid but not all survive. Only a few develop into adults. Not all mother frogs stay around to watch the eggs. The eggs face the danger of being eaten by ducks, fish, insects and other water creatures.



6-21 days later the eggs hatch and out swims a...

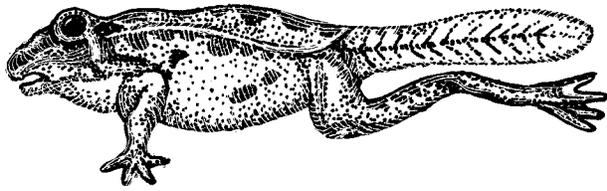


TADPOLE – At this point the tadpole has a mouth, *gills*—which help it breathe oxygen when it is underwater—and a tail. The tadpole lives in water and swims around looking for its food, *algae*. After 6-9 weeks the tadpole changes. It begins to grow legs and lungs to prepare itself for land. After 9 weeks the tadpole looks like a tiny frog with a long tail; it is on its way to becoming an adult.



Life cycle illustrations © Ron Bourque

NEW YORK CITY AUDUBON RUNS PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN. **LOOK IT UP** AT: WWW.NYCAUDUBON.ORG.



THE YOUNG FROG – After 12 weeks the tadpole will almost be an adult. It has a tiny tail and looks like a small frog. The young frog has not left the water yet.

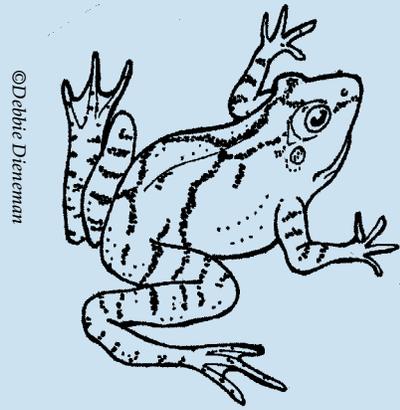
THE ADULT FROG – After 12 to 16 weeks the frog has completed “The Frog Cycle” and will be ready to head off to land. Some species of frogs, like bullfrogs and green frogs, live in or near the water as adults. Some spend more time on land.



THE CYCLE STARTS AGAIN

The female frog is now ready to produce and lay eggs. Eventually she will find a mate and lay eggs. The male fertilizes the eggs and the frog cycle begins again!

Frog Extinction:



GONE FOREVER

Frogs are becoming extinct throughout the world. Scientists are not sure what the reason is for this but some say it is because of climate change, disease, and habitat loss. All of this can cause harm to the frog eggs, tadpoles, and adults.





Reasons That Caused Frogs to Be Endangered

Hi my name is Tatiana Eder. I am 10 years old and this is my second time writing for "Look Around." I enjoy playing with my pets, hanging out with my friends, listening to music and reading. The reason I am writing is because I want to inform people about endangered frogs and how you can help save them.

Almost half of the frog population in the world has disappeared because of climate change, destruction of their homes, pollution, and poisoning. Frogs breathe through their skin and because of pollution they have trouble breathing and then they die. When frogs are poisoned it causes a skin fungus which can prevent them from breathing, too. There is also a kind of fish that eats tadpoles so that they can't become adult frogs.

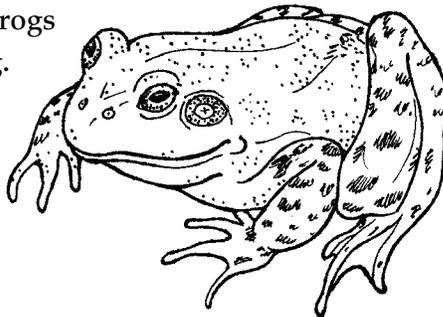
Another reason frogs are becoming extinct is that in some schools students dissect frogs to learn about their internal organs. Animal activists have protested this and now there is a program on the computer to do dissection without harming the actual frogs.

There is a special program called "Amphibian Ark" which helps save frogs. The "Amphibian Ark" goes to zoos that have very rare frogs and are trying to protect them and refresh their populations. Zoos also tell people about these problems to help save the frogs.

Doctors have also discovered that a substance in a frogs' skin can help prevent diabetes.

A great place to see endangered frogs is the Bronx Zoo. It has a special place for lizards, reptiles and amphibians. You can just LOOK AROUND and see all kinds of critters. Another place where I found things out about frogs was at: allaboutfrogs.org/info/save/save.html. This site is all about frogs and informs you of the dangers of why frogs are disappearing.

by Tatiana Eder



Some ways to save frogs are by practicing the 3 R's

REDUCE
REUSE
RECYCLE

You can also plant trees and not bring paper bag lunches to school. You could really help increase the frog population and you should get families and friends to help too!

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