



Green Frog (*Lithobates/Rana clamitans*)

Lith-o-bait-ees clam-it-tans mel-in-not-ah



Blue Phase

Description: The green frog is a fairly typical ranid frog ranging in size from 2 ½ to 4 ½ inches. Ground color can range from brown to greenish brown, to olive brown, with some turquoise-blue specimens also being known. The dorsal surface may have scattered, dark spots or mottling as well. A major identifying feature of the green frog which distinguishes it from the American Bullfrog (*Lithobates/Rana catesbeianus*), are the presence of dorsolateral skin folds along the dorsum. This feature may not be immediately evident on young or juvenile frogs, however.

Taxonomy and Classification:

<http://www.madisonherps.org>

Life: All living, physical, and animate entities

Domain: Eukaryota

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata/Vertebrata

Class: Amphibia

Order: Anura

Suborder: Neobatrachia

Family: Ranidae

Genus: Rana/Lithobates

Species: *Rana/Lithobates clamitans**

*Taxonomy subject to change and revision.

Similar/Confusing Species: American bullfrogs (*Lithobates catesbeianus*) are larger as adults, and lack dorsolateral ridges. Mink frogs (*Lithobates septentrionalis*) are limited in distribution to the northern third of Wisconsin, have absent to weak dorsolateral ridges, have heavier mottling, and give off a musky odor when handled. Northern leopard frogs (*Lithobates pipiens*) have larger, darker, more conspicuous blotches and lighter colored dorsolateral ridges. For tadpole/larvae identification, see the following link below:

<http://watermonitoring.uwex.edu/pdf/level1/wepp/TadpoleLarvaSalamanderKeys.pdf>

Etymology: Lithobates- Litho (stone) bates (one that walks, treads, hunts). clamitans-clamito (cry loudly). Rana-Latin for "frog".

Sounds/Call: The anurans are perhaps the most audible and vocal of the herptile groups. The Green frog's call sounds similar to a banjo string being plucked; "Gunk-gunk". Green frogs may also produce other sounds/vocalizations (such as distress, territorial, or rivalry calls), but some rustling and/or plopping into water may also be heard.

Subspecies: None currently.

Range & Habitat: Common and widespread statewide. Found in most permanent to semi-permanent bodies of water including lakes, ponds, marshes, slow moving streams and rivers, and river backwaters.

Habits & Natural History: Green frogs are perhaps the most common and widespread semi aquatic ranid frog in Wisconsin. They typically begin their calling in May, and continue through much of late spring and early to mid-summer to July. Like most ranid frogs, they readily consume insects and other aquatic invertebrates, and occasionally smaller amphibians.

Phenology: Green frogs emerge from overwintering as early as the first warm days of mid to late April or May and begin calling from late May through July. They will remain active throughout the rest of the year through late September or October (or sometimes even later in the year if warmer temperatures persist or otherwise permit).

<http://www.madisonherps.org>

Conservation Status: WI Common with no special protections, but regulated by WI DNR. IUCN Red List Least Concern (LC).

Contact

Authored by Eric Roscoe. For any additional questions, comments, and/or concerns regarding this species, group of species, or this informational sheet, please email and contact the Madison Area Herpetological Society at info@madisonherps.org

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