



Western Chorus Frog (*Pseudacris triseriata*)

Boreal Chorus Frog (*Pseudacris maculata*)

Sood-ache-chris try-sear-e-ate-ah and *Sood-ache-chris mack-you-late-ah*



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Description: Chorus frogs are a very small hylid frog ranging from 0.7 to 1 ½ inches in size. Background color can vary from light to dark brown, tan, grayish-brown, to pale green or greenish-brown with anywhere from 3 to 6 darker, broken longitudinal dorsal stripes. These dorsal stripes may be inconspicuous or even absent in some specimens. There is also usually a darker ocular (eye) stripe present as well. Toe pads are present, but are weakly defined.

Taxonomy and Classification:

Life: All living, physical, and animate entities

Domain: Eukaryota

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata/Vertebrata

Class: Amphibia

Order: Anura

Suborder: Neobatrachia

Family: Hylidae

Genus: *Pseudacris*

Species: *Pseudacris triseriata** and *Pseudacris maculata**

**Taxonomy subject to change and revision.*

Similar/Confusing Species: Spring Peepers (*Pseudacris crucifer*) have a large, imperfect “X” pattern on their dorsum. Eastern and Cope’s Gray Treefrogs (*Hyla/Dryophytes versicolor* and *Hyla/Dryophytes chrysoscelis*) are larger, have somewhat warty skin, and more well defined toe pads. Blanchard’s cricket frogs (*Acris crepitans*) have wartier skin, and a greenish to reddish, or reddish-orange triangular marking on their dorsum. Wood frogs (*Lithobates sylvaticus*) are larger, lack toe pads, have dorsolateral ridges, and a distinct dark facial mask. For tadpole/larvae identification, see the following link below:

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

Etymology: *Pseudacris*-Pseudos (lie) akris (locust). *triseriata*-tri (three) seriata (lines or serrations). *maculata*-macula (spot) or maculosus (spotted).

Sounds/Call: The anurans are perhaps the most audible and vocal of the herptile groups. Both species of chorus frogs have harsh “cree-eeek” sounding call similar to fingernails running the teeth of a comb. Chorus 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.

Range & Habitat: Chorus frogs range over most of Wisconsin except extreme north central and north eastern portions of the state, but ranges for the two species are not well defined. Both Western and Boreal chorus frogs occupy and breed in temporary to semi-permanent wetlands including marshes, moist fields, prairies, grassy ditches, and meadows.

Habits & Natural History: The western and boreal chorus frogs are among the earliest anuran species to begin calling, typically from mid to late March, and usually lasting into May. These frogs will often call from within clumps of grass, debris, or vegetation, which can make visually locating calling individuals difficult. Following breeding season, these frogs disperse to surrounding moist to drier areas, and are primarily solitary, feeding on tiny insects, arthropods, and isopods. Chorus frogs occasionally climb into low vegetation, but their weakly defined toe pads do not suit them for a strongly arboreal lifestyle such as that of true hylid frogs.

Phenology: Chorus frogs are among the earliest frogs to emerge and begin calling. They emerge from overwintering as early as the first warm days of mid March to early April, and begin calling from late March through May. 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).

Conservation Status: WI Common with no special protections, but regulated by the 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

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