

AMERICAN BULLFROG

Rana [Lithobates] catesbeiana



This circle area is called tympanum

Carl D. Howe, Wikipedia Commons



American Bullfrog Tadpole

Dave Huth, Flickr



Paul Skawinski UW-Stevens Point Extension Lake



USFWS, Flickr

CHARACTERISTICS

SIZE:

The largest frog species in North America, adults are 3-6 inches long and can weigh up to 2 lbs. Tadpoles are about 4 inches long at most.

COLOR:

Adults are pale to dark olive green with darker spots and white-yellow undersides. Males have a yellow throat and are slightly smaller than females. Tadpoles are green with dark spots and a white-yellow underside.

SHAPE:

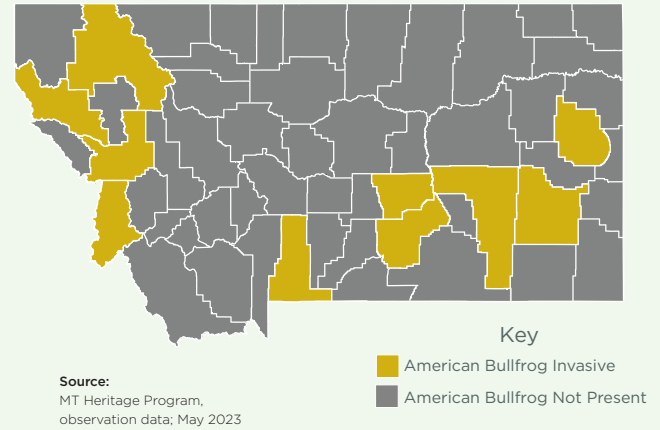
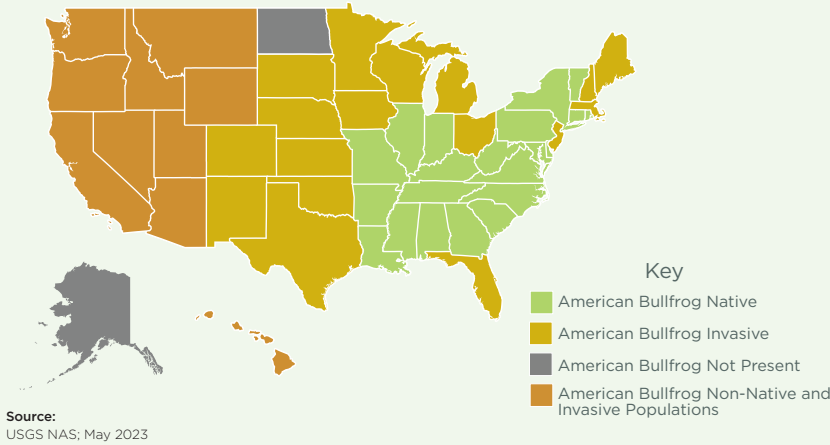
Adults have large eardrums (tympanum) that appear as folds from their ear to their eye. Folds on males are twice as big as their eye.

CALL:

Males can be identified by their loud, deep call during mating season (June-August)

For more detailed information on Protecting Montana Waters from Aquatic Invasive Species visit <https://fwp.mt.gov/conservation/aquatic-invasive-species>

DISTRIBUTION



HABITAT:

Ponds, wetlands, and other slow-moving water with abundant emergent vegetation. They are tolerant of low temperatures and can hibernate in substrate in below freezing temperatures.

NATIVE TO:

Eastern and central North America

PREVENTION AND SPREAD:

Originally introduced outside of native range via escape from aquaculture operations as well as intentional release of pet bullfrogs into the wild. Once escaped, they disperse by swimming or being carried by water flow. They can also disperse overland and can travel up to several hundred meters. They are prolific reproducers and can lay up to 20,000 eggs at a time. The easiest way to prevent invasion is by not releasing pet frogs.

Sources:
Montana Field Guide, USFWS

IMPACTS:

Bullfrogs will eat anything they can swallow including native frogs and have been linked to the decline of many native amphibians throughout the western US. They also eat rodents, birds, fish, and bats.

IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS:

Can be distinguished from native frogs by their large size (3-6 inches long, up to 2lbs) and the presence of the tympanum.

IN MONTANA:

Present in the Bitterroot, Clark Fork, Flathead, and Yellowstone Watersheds.

If you see or suspect a new infestation of an invasive plant or animal, please save a specimen, and record the location.

Report observations to Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks at
<https://fwp.mt.gov/conservation/aquatic-invasive-species/report-an-ais>
Or call the MT FWP front desk at 406-444-2440

