

Frog Identification



Chorus Frog
 3/4" to 1 1/2"
 Breeds very early, often while snow remains. A tree frog with long black mask and three dark stripes down its back.



Wood Frog
 1 3/8" to 3 1/4"
 Breeds early in spring then disappears into moist woodlands. Note short black mask.



Northern Leopard Frog
 2" to 5"
 Slender brown or green frog with light edges around irregularly shaped spots.



Pickerel Frog
 1 3/4" to 3 1/2"
 Slender green or tan frog with parallel rows of square shaped spots down its back. Yellow belly patch by inner thigh.



American Toad
 2" to 4 3/8"
 Large bumpy brown to greenish colored toad.



Bull Frog
 3 1/2" to 8"
 Our largest frog in Michigan but not very common locally. Greenish yellow with random mottling. Cream colored belly with lighter gray spots.



Gray or Copes Tree Frog
 1 1/4" to 2 3/8"
 Rarely venture from the trees. Bight green to gray usually with splotches of gray. Sticky texture. Bight yellow belly.



Mink Frog
 1 7/8" to 3"
 Olive to brown in color with uniform mottling along sides and legs. Pungent mink like odor. Yellowish colored belly.



Green Frog
 2 1/8" to 4"
 Green or brownish colored frog with green upper lip. Large eardrum. White belly with black spots. Sounds like banjo strings.



Spring Peeper
 3/4" to 1 3/8"
 One of our smallest and most abundant tree frogs. Note the brown color and x mark on its back.



Northern Cricket Frog
 5/8" to 1 1/2"
 Very rare tiny tree frog that looks almost black. Has a dark triangle between eyes.

Malformed Frog Study

A part of the Wetlands Wildlife Inventory

On the Keweenaw Bay Indian Reservation



Background Information

In 1995, students found numerous malformed frogs on a field trip to a Minnesota pond. Since that time, reports of malformed frogs have increased dramatically throughout the United States. Overall, malformed frogs have been reported in 44 states and in 38 species of frogs and 19 species of toads.

Malformations are irregular growth patterns that initiate in the developmental stages of the frogs life, namely within the egg and during metamorphosis from tadpole to frog. Malformations are generally caused by one of three factors: chemical contamination, parasitic infection, and possibly increased exposure to UV light during the development of the tadpole within the egg. It is not possible to determine the cause strictly by the morphology of the malformation, but rather with careful exploratory procedures at a wildlife health laboratory.

If we do find malformed frogs on the Keweenaw Bay Indian Reservation, we may not be able to determine what specifically caused it. This would require significant amounts of money to fund necessary lab work. However, it will put our area on the map for future investigations that may eventually answer this question. At this point, we simply seek to determine whether or not we have malformed frogs on reservation wetlands.

So far in Michigan, less than 2% of all amphibians examined have been found with malformations. This is a good thing and we hope to find our results are similar. Therefore, reporting normally formed frogs is equally important as reporting the malformed individuals.

Materials Needed

- Rubber boots or wading shoes
- Frog Nets
- Frog ID Pamphlet
- Bucket with lid
- Malformity Survey Form
- Pencil
- Insect Repellent (NOT on hands)

Methods

Search along edges of wetland areas and open water. Pickerel frogs and leopard frogs can be found in grassy areas some distance from the water's edge. Be very careful not to injure the frogs in your effort to capture them.

When approaching water's edge, frogs will most likely jump in. Wait patiently for them to resurface. Then, move your net carefully toward the frog, coming at it head on. Flip the net over the frog, plunging it several inches below the water and pull back on the handle.

Collect all your specimens first, then ID them and look for malformations. This helps to avoid counting the same frog twice.



Hold the frogs under the front legs with the frog facing you and legs dangling down. Be careful not to squeeze the abdomen. Check the following body parts:

1. Both eyes are present and symmetrical
2. Front legs are present and symmetrical
3. Back legs are present and symmetrical
4. Count that toes are present in correct numbers (4 on front feet, 5 on back feet)
5. Do not count trauma-related injury as a malformation (leg bitten off or broken)

Please be thorough in completing the Malformation Survey form. Keep any malformed frogs and bring them to the KBIC Natural Resource Department (Fish Hatchery on Pequaming Rd) within 24 hours. Keep them in a (5 gallon) bucket, half filled with fresh pond water and covered loosely with a lid (allow air to enter but the frog not to exit).

Please mail or drop off the Malformation Survey Form regardless of whether or not you find any malformed frogs. Healthy frogs are a good sign that we have healthy wetlands!

Mail Surveys and/or
Bring Malformed Frogs

To:

KBIC Natural Resource Department
14359 Pequaming Road
L'Anse, MI 49946
906-524-5757 Xt. 19
Fax: 906-524-5748