



TADPOLE  
BODY LENGTH: 3-2"  
Hatch: Dec.-Mar.



ADULT BODY LENGTH: 3-5"  
EGG-LAYING

## Western Toad

### *Bufo boreas*

Toads are easily recognized by their bumpy skin, lumpy body shape, short legs and a small cream-colored dorsal stripe. If you handle one, you will not get warts, but they do secrete a sticky toxic substance that can cause irritation to your eyes and mouth.

The Western Toad is usually found in wooded areas or forests, grasslands and meadows. They seek shelter by burying themselves in loose soil or moving into other animals' burrows, such as ground squirrels. Males have smoother skin than females, with fewer blotchy spots, but both have cream or light yellow throats, and parotid glands behind their eyes.

Toads are more active at night when they venture out hunting for small insects, worms, and other invertebrates.

Females lay their eggs near the water's edge in cylindrical strings, like a string of beads. The Western toad's tadpole is dark in color and may grow to be an inch or two in length.

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TADPOLE  
BODY LENGTH: 5-2"  
Hatch: Dec.-Mar.

ADULT BODY LENGTH: 3-6.5"  
EGG-LAYING  
12 Costal Grooves

## California Tiger Salamander

### *Ambystoma californiense*

California tiger salamanders live a very precarious life. They depend upon other creatures to provide burrows, since they lack the claws to dig their own homes. They also depend on rainfall to fill the ponds or small temporary pools in which they mate. Females lay eggs in clumps or one by one, on grass or weeds. That environment is also home to many predators which may eat them and their eggs and tadpoles. Then the pools may dry up in the summer, so they must move to places that will remain moist enough to sustain them until the next rainy season. No wonder they spend most of their daylight hours in the safety of burrows.

The annual migration to breeding ponds can be risky if these salamanders have to cross roads, highways, or fields with the possibility of predators lurking, or being run over and crushed by vehicular traffic.

California tiger salamanders are usually nocturnal. They are carnivores, eating snails, slugs, and other invertebrates. Their tadpoles will eat other tadpoles including frogs, toads, and other salamanders. Large, feathery gills are a distinct feature of these tadpoles.

# AMPHIBIANS

Amphibians were the first vertebrates on land about 300 to 350 million years ago. The word amphibian is derived from ancient Greek and means "two lives." This refers to their "tadpole" water breathing form and the adult air breathing form. All amphibians are strongly tied to water, even as adults, and many breathe through their skin. Keep that in mind when you see a frog or salamander and look with your eyes, not with your hands - the oil on our hands can clog their skin and cause them difficulty in breathing.



BODY LENGTH: 3-5.5"  
EGG-BEARING; Hatch: Dec.-Apr.

## California Slender Salamander

### *Batrachoseps attenuatus*

This little salamander might easily be mistaken for a worm. Look closely and you will see four tiny little legs and four tiny little toes on those legs. Slender salamanders are often found in leaf litter, in the moist ground under logs and rocks or in old tree stumps. Sometimes they coil while resting, resembling a rusty spring.

Slender salamanders are secretive and typically nocturnal. In appearance they have a sooty or black belly with a reddish-brown body that is moist and smooth. They are carnivorous and their diet includes worms and many kinds of small spiders. They lay eggs which hatch and grow into small versions of the adults, without going through a tadpole stage.



TADPOLE  
BODY LENGTH: 5-6.5"  
Hatch: May-Oct.



BODY LENGTH: 3.5-8"  
EGG-BEARING  
Breed: Feb.-Jul.

## Bull Frog

*Rana catesbeiana*

Bull frogs are nomads that have taken over many ponds and streams, with big appetites for native frog species' eggs and tadpoles. Before being introduced, they did not live west of the Rockies.

Adults have a conspicuous eardrum behind each eye, and in males it is larger in size than the eyes. They have a fold of skin that extends from the eye, around the eardrum and toward the shoulder and forearm.

Bull frogs usually remain in or near permanent water sources like ponds, lakes, streams, marshes, and reservoirs. They are nocturnal and hide in aquatic vegetation while looking for food. Besides eating other frogs, their diet includes crayfish, insects, and minnows.

When the female lays eggs, they form together in rafts that float and later sink into the water. After they hatch, the tadpoles have a rounded snout, eyes are widely spaced on their heads and they are a dark olive-green color.



TADPOLE  
BODY LENGTH: 5-1.75"  
Hatch: Jan.-Aug.



BODY LENGTH: 0.75-2"  
EGG-BEARING  
Breed: Mar.-May

## Pacific Tree Frog

*Hyla regilla*

This little frog has a mighty voice, which is the most commonly heard of all the frogs. It has a loud and distinct sound—creck-ek. When many adults begin to sing, their voices can easily drown out other night sounds. In Hollywood, this voice is used in movies to represent any type of frog.

Tree frogs have a dark eye stripe of black or dark brown. Their body color can be green, brown, tan, or a blend. They are very small, usually found on the ground near low growing plants near water. They have toe pads, and occasionally climb up vertical surfaces in pursuit of small insects and spiders to eat, or to escape from danger.

Females lay eggs in loose clusters at the edge of still water. There the egg clusters become attached to plant stems, sticks, or low growing vegetation until they hatch. One female may lay as many as 700 eggs.

Tadpoles are dark green with black spots. They have a round mouth and their eyes are set to the outside edges of their heads.



TADPOLE  
BODY LENGTH: 5-3"  
Hatch: May-Jul.



BODY LENGTH: 2-5.25"  
EGG-BEARING  
Breed: Nov-Jan.

## Red-Legged Frog

*Rana aurora*

Red-legged frogs have smooth skin mottled with dark spots, and distinctive reddish coloration on the lower abdomen and on the undersides of the hind legs. A cream-colored stripe runs along their jaw, and they have distinct dorso-lateral folds. These frogs have long legs and webbed hind feet, allowing them to jump far to escape any threat of danger.

The famous story, "The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County," written by Mark Twain, featured the red-legged frog.

These frogs prefer ponds and slowly flowing streams with cattails and a dense cover of weeds and aquatic plants. Eggs are laid in round or oval clusters and attached to vegetation at the edge of the water.

If you see a red-legged frog you are very fortunate because their populations are shrinking. Scientific studies show that predation by nonnative fish and bullfrogs, along with habitat loss and pollution, is causing the decline of these frogs.