

Bullfrogs are very large, up to 9 inches long, and can be green, olive or brown in colour. The stomach is whitish with dark or fuzzy grey markings. The eardrum, located behind the eye, is very large and conspicuous. There is a fold of skin that runs from behind the eye, around the eardrum and down to the shoulder.



Bullfrog eggs form large, loose, jelly-like masses of up to 20,000 eggs that float on the surface of the water.



The tadpoles are large, about 10 cm long, and may spend a year in a pond before reaching adulthood. New frogs are about 4 cm long and are able to breed within three to four years of hatching.

### Other invasive species to keep an eye out for in the Lower Mainland include:

- Himalayan Blackberries
- Evergreen Blackberries
- Scotch Broom
- Himalayan Balsam
- English Ivy
- Japanese Knotweed
- Tansy Ragwort
- Reed Canary Grass
- Lamiastrum

### Invasive Species are Taking Over!

An **Invasive Species** is a plant or animal living outside of its natural habitat that displays aggressive and rapid growth. Their incredible ability to reproduce, and the absence of natural predators, enables these invaders to quickly threaten natural ecological systems. Left unchecked, invasive species will out-compete native species and eventually become dominant. As a result, native species often lose the battle, overwhelmed by aggressive alien invaders.

### So What Can We Do?

- Educate** yourself and neighbours about invasive species found in your community;
- Use **native plants** in your yard;
- Encourage** your community and local government to use native plants in landscaping;
- Dig up** alien invaders from your backyard;
- Minimize** disturbance of natural areas in your local parks by staying on the path and keeping dogs on leashes; and
- Volunteer** with groups holding invasive species removal days in your community

For more information please visit our website at: [www.leps.bc.ca](http://www.leps.bc.ca)



Habitat Stewardship Program - Species at Risk

# Bullfrog

*(Rana catesbeiana)*

Also referred to as: American Bullfrog



You have probably seen or heard these large, noisy frogs hanging around ponds on a warm summer evening. Bullfrogs were originally imported from Eastern Canada to be sold to restaurants for frog's legs. The industry didn't succeed and the frogs were released (or escaped) into the wild. Due to its large size, voracious appetite and lack of effective natural predators, this frog is very successful in taking over ponds and reducing the numbers of native amphibians and reptiles found in these habitats.



**Habitat:**

Bullfrogs require large, permanent bodies of water. They prefer warm, weedy ponds and lakes with steep banks, which they use to leap into the water to escape predators, but they may also be found in ditches and slow moving streams. They will bask in the sun on land during the day, but always remain close to water.

**Reproduction:**

Reproduction usually occurs from mid-June to late-July. Late in the spring, males establish territories which they defend aggressively. The male grabs the first female that enters his territory from behind in an embrace known as *amplexus*. If she is willing, she releases her eggs which are then fertilized by the male. The throat and chin of the male turn yellow during breeding season. Their calls during this time can be heard over several kilometres.

**Problems:**

Bullfrogs have an amazing appetite and will eat just about anything. The diet of the adult includes insects, young birds, mice, fish and snakes. They will also eat other amphibians and reptiles and even smaller Bullfrogs. Their presence in a pond has been shown to reduce the numbers of native amphibians. Smaller Bullfrogs may be eaten by herons, raccoons and other predators, but the large adults are too big for any predator in our region.



Bullfrogs can be distinguished by their call which is a deep-pitched bellow that sounds like “jug-o-rum” or “br-wum”. When surprised, they may emit a squawk or even a cat-like *meow*. If a male embraces another male during breeding season, the embraced male will give a release call that sounds like someone blowing their nose very loudly.



**Control:**

To control the spread this species, prevent the movement of adults, tadpoles and eggs by human means. Do not move them from one pond to another, as they may end up colonizing other water bodies. The eggs and tadpoles are attractive as pets or school projects, but should not be collected as it may help in their spread. Planting native species to increase shade around a pond keeps the water temperature low, which discourages Bullfrogs, but is great for native frogs. Keep backyard ponds shallow. Bullfrog tadpoles need deep water to hide in and to undergo metamorphosis.

**Note:** Bullfrog adults are protected from inhumane treatment by the BC Wildlife Act. Contact LEPS for more information on legislation concerning invasive species.

Disposal	
<b>How</b>	Remove egg masses from the water with a net or other scoop, and let dry on the ground. Try to get as many eggs as possible.
<b>When</b>	Mid-May to early July when they start to appear in the water.
<b>Duration</b>	Four to twenty days depending on water temperature.
<b>Pros/Cons</b>	Removal of egg masses is a humane and easy way to control Bullfrog numbers. The eggs are easily identified by their loose, jelly-like consistency and by the way they run through the fingers when picked up. However, some eggs may be missed, so allow 3-4 years for results to be seen.