

SPECIES AT A GLANCE

American Bullfrog



REPORT THIS SPECIES!

Oregon: 1-866-INVADER or OregonInvasivesHotline.org

Washington: 1-877-9-INFEST or www.invasivespecies.wa.gov/report.shtml

California: www.dfg.ca.gov/delta/mittencrab/sightings.asp

The **American bullfrog** (*Rana catesbeiana*) is the largest frog in the U.S., weighing up to one pound. It has been cultivated globally for its edible legs and has been introduced and spread to many regions around the globe as a food source and through aquaculture escape. The bullfrog is native to the eastern U.S., and invasive in much of the western U.S. and on several other continents. It is often a dominant species in new environments, due to a limited number of predators (e.g., dragonfly larvae) and its generalist eating habit (they will eat anything that fits in their mouths, even their own young!).

Species in the news

Case Study: Bullfrogs aid in the spread of Ranavirus that is infecting native frogs internationally, as well as the chytrid fungus and other infectious threats.

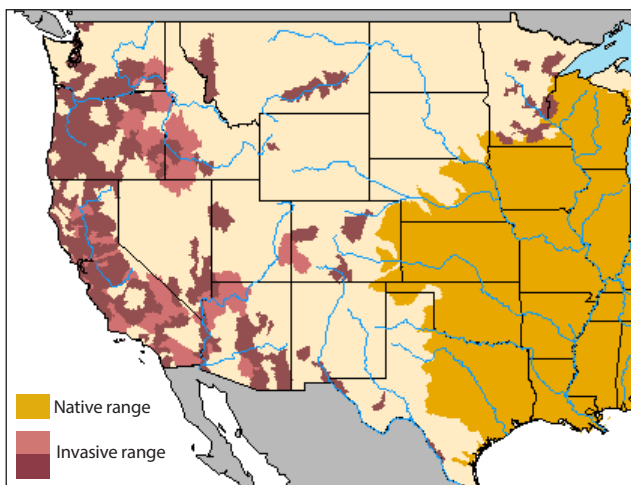
"Ranavirus in invasive bullfrogs, Belgium" <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3311206>

Learning extensions

"How many bullfrogs can you find?" learning activity. Investigate the role of the pet trade on spread of bullfrogs and/or other invasives.

Resources

USDA National Agricultural Library Fact Sheet. <http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/aquatics/bullfrog.shtml>



Bullfrog invasive range in the western U.S. (map created on July 9, 2016 by USGS). For an interactive map on bullfrog invasion, visit <http://nas.er.usgs.gov/viewer/omap.aspx/SpeciesID=71>.

COOL FACTS

- A female bullfrog can lay up to 20,000 eggs at one time. Native frogs only lay 2,000 to 5,000 eggs.
- Bullfrogs will eat anything they can fit in their mouths, including baby turtles and birds and even their own young.
- Tadpoles are herbivores and adults are carnivores.

Why you should care

Bullfrogs, which were commonly harvested for game meat, are a highly invasive species in the western U.S., Asia, Europe, and South America. They are able to thrive because they are voracious predators and their natural predators are absent. Bullfrogs cause decline of native species through competition and predation. The bullfrog can also be a carrier of the chytrid fungus that affects frogs and amphibians, and is a contributor to many dwindling native amphibian populations around the world.

How they got here and spread

Bullfrogs were accidentally introduced as a contaminant in fish stocking. They were also introduced as a food source (frog legs) in the 1900s. Since then, they have spread into natural areas by escaping or release.

What you can do

- Do not release the bullfrog in any natural areas.
- Inform others about the problems of invasive vertebrates and the methods to prevent their spread.