

Northern Green Frog

Rana clamitans clamitans

Natural History



Description: The Green Frog group is made up of two subspecies, the Northern Green Frog and the slightly smaller Bronze Frog. The Northern Green Frog is the second largest frog in Minnesota and Wisconsin and grows to be over 3 1/2 inches long. It is easily recognized by its greenish-brown back, white belly and light green upper lip. Males have a yellow throat and their tympanum (tim-pan-um) is notably larger than their eye. Tadpoles are olive green and creamy-white below.

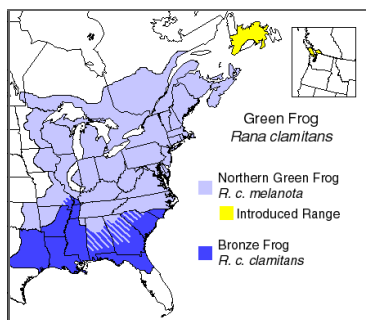
Vocalizations: A Green Frog's mating call sounds like a string being plucked on a banjo. The Green Frog makes a number of other calls including a "growl" that males make to scare off competing males. The Green Frog will also make an alert call when startled or attacked.

Breeding: Green Frogs breed from May to August. A female will lay up to 4,000 eggs in a large floating mass in slow or non-flowing water. Tadpoles may overwinter and metamorphose into frogs the following spring. Green Frogs reach mature breeding age two years after metamorphosis.

Distribution: Green Frogs are found east of the Great Plains from the Gulf of Mexico north to central Ontario and Quebec. They are found only in the eastern half of Minnesota.

Habitat: Green Frogs are mainly aquatic, but young frogs will disperse into nearby meadows during rains or at night. Green Frogs need a permanent body of water for breeding and are usually found near streams, ponds, marshes and lakes.

Diet: Tadpoles are herbivores. Adult Green Frogs eat insects, worms, spiders, slugs, other frogs and even small fish. Their hunting style is to wait and catch prey that moves near them.



Range Map Source:

Lifespan: These frogs can live to be 10 years old, but usually only live to be 3 years in the wild due to predation by fish, birds, reptiles, mammals and humans. Green Frogs that are found in the same region as Mink Frogs appear similar to the musky-smelling, bad tasting Mink Frog. This is a form of mimicry that helps deter predators.

Conservation Status: The Green Frog is common throughout its range and listed as Least Concern.