



Learning About Frogs

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Chapter One

All Kinds of Frogs

From American bullfrogs to red-eyed tree frogs, many kinds of frogs live all over Earth. You may think of frogs as being green and bumpy, but they can actually be brown, blue, orange, black, or just about any color of the rainbow. Many have smooth skin.

Adult bullfrogs live in weedy places near water.



Frogs can be different sizes. Some kinds are smaller than a marble. Others are as big as a rat.

Frogs live in different places, too. Many frogs live in water or near the water's edge. Yet some frogs live high in trees.



This tree frog croaks to attract a mate.



red-eyed tree frog



The tiger-leg leaf frog lives in the forests of South America.

All frogs are alike in some ways. All frogs are **amphibians**. An amphibian is an animal that starts life in water and then moves to land.

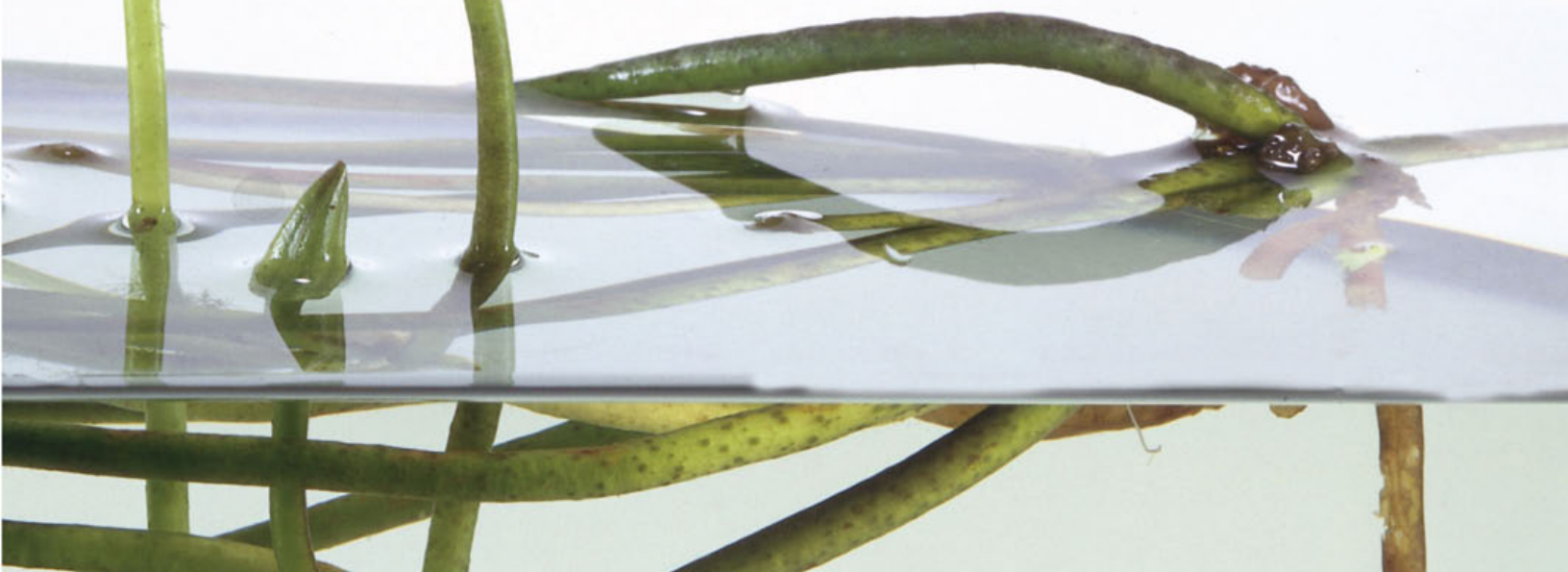
Frogs are similar in other ways, too. They all have four legs and short bodies. Their back legs are always much longer than their front legs.

They all have two large eyes that stick out from their heads.





Using its strong back legs, a frog can jump about 20 times its own length!



Chapter Two

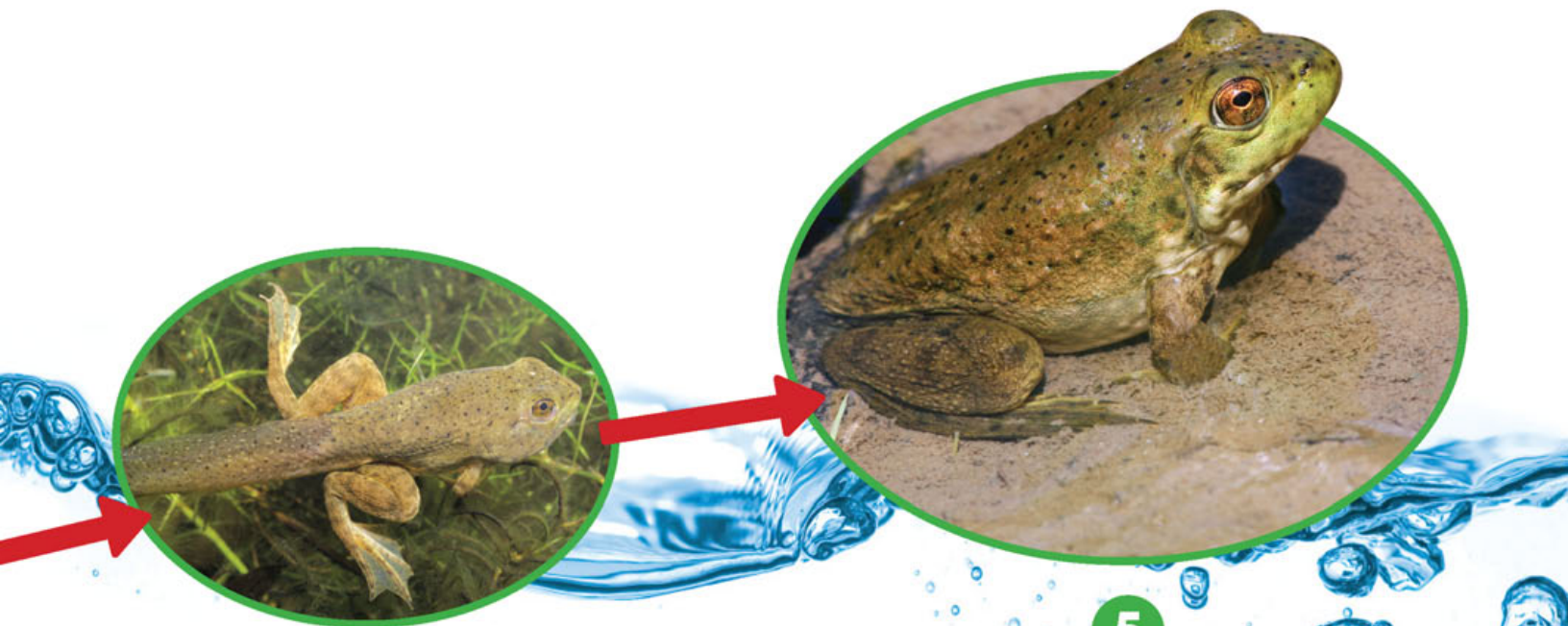
Frogs Grow and Change

Most frogs change shape as they grow. A frog begins life as an **egg**. Then, a small **tadpole** comes out of the egg. It looks like a fish and has **gills** to help it breathe in water.

How a Frog Changes



Next the tadpole grows legs and **lungs**. Its tail gets shorter and smaller. Over time, its legs grow longer and stronger. Finally, the young frog grows into an **adult**. It can live on land.



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Next the tadpole grows front legs, and its lungs develop.

5

The adult frog leaves the water. It can breathe air. In a year or two, it can make more frogs.

Chapter Three

Life as an Adult

Life is not easy for adult frogs. As adults, frogs must hunt for insects or other small animals for food. Their strong back legs help them jump and sneak up on small animals. Their long, sticky tongues help them catch and swallow a meal.



This frog gets food with its long, sticky tongue.

Frogs must also keep safe from other animals that might harm them. Some frogs stay safe by blending in with their **environment**. Their colors help them hide. Other frogs have bright colors that help them keep safe. Bright colors are a sign to keep away—these frogs are poisonous!



The poison dart frog's bright colors say, "Keep away. I'm poisonous!"

This Darwin frog stays safe by blending in with fallen leaves.



This green tree frog can sleep safely on a green leaf.



Chapter Four

Frogs in Trouble

Some kinds of frogs are in trouble. People who have been studying frogs have found that in many places, there are fewer frogs each year. This is not a problem for all kinds of frogs, just some kinds.



The Panamanian golden frog is endangered. There are very few alive in the wild.

Fewer numbers is not the only way that frogs are in trouble. Some frogs are not growing right. Some frogs are missing legs or have extra legs. As a result, they cannot move easily to get food or to get away from danger. Then they may die.

This frog is missing part of its back leg.



This frog has an extra leg. These frogs were caught in the wild and were cared for by people.



What is the reason for all the trouble? There may be several reasons. One idea is that each year, people cut down trees, drain swamps, and build homes and roads in places where frogs live. Because of this, frogs have fewer places to live and **reproduce**. Fewer frogs are born.

**People are changing this environment.
That can affect frogs and other animals.**



Another problem may be water **pollution**. That is what happens when waste gets in the water. Remember that frogs grow in water. They get their food in and around water, too. Dirty water can make them sick.



**Frogs cannot survive
in polluted water.**

Why does this matter? Frogs are a sign of the health of our environment. If frogs are in trouble, then our environment is in trouble, too. And that is not good for frogs, people, or other animals.

It is important to keep studying frogs in order to find out what is harming them. That way, we can try to protect them and our environment.



Glossary

adult: a plant or animal that has grown to full size

amphibian: an animal that usually starts life in water and spends its adult life on land

egg: a round object laid by some kinds of animals and from which an animal grows

environment: an area or place and all the things in it

gill: a body part used by animals to breathe in water

lung: a body part used by animals to breathe on land

pollution: what happens when waste enters air, water, or land

reproduce: to make more of one's kind

tadpole: a young frog; the stage in a frog's life after it hatches from an egg

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