

American Bullfrog (*Lithobates catesbeianus*)

Key Features:

- The largest of all North American frogs, this giant can grow to a length of 8 inches or more and weigh up to 1.5 pounds. Even the tadpoles of this species can reach 6.75 inches in length
- American bullfrog is usually green, olive-green, brown or grey in color. Its skin is bumpy and covered with dark blotches or spots that provide camouflage.
- American bullfrog has strong body with large head and wide mouth. Hind legs are powerful and designed for jumping. It moves through the water easily thanks to its webbed feet.
- American bullfrog has eyes of golden color, long and sticky tongue and circular eardrums on both sides of the head. These organs facilitate identification of the prey and ensure successful hunt.



Habitat:

- Bullfrogs live in freshwater ponds, lakes, and marshes
- They are among the most wide-ranging of all North American amphibians, found in freshwater ponds, lakes, and marshes from Nova Scotia, Canada, throughout the continental United States, and as far south as Mexico and Cuba. They have even found their way to Europe, South America, and Asia.

Diet:

- Nocturnal predators, they will ambush and eat just about anything they can fit in their ample mouths, including insects, mice, fish, birds, and snakes.

Young:

- Mating season takes place during the spring and summer. Females lay 20 000 eggs that float on the surface of water. High temperature of water is required for egg development.
- Tadpoles will emerge from eggs after one week. They will transform into adult animals after a couple of weeks to a couple of years, depending on the water temperature.

Interesting facts:

- The male bullfrog's call is deep and loud. Jug-o-rum, jug-o-rum, it calls. Some people think it sounds like a cow mooing, which is why the frog has "bull" in its name.
- They hunt at night, waiting patiently until they see something pass by that they figure would make a good meal. Then, with a powerful leap, they lunge at their prey with their mouths wide open.
- Bullfrogs like warm weather. When it turns cold, they dig down into mud to hibernate.
- A group of bull frogs is call an Army, or colony
- Males are highly territorial and will aggressively guard their land. Females are slightly larger than males.
- The bullfrog can survive up to 10 years in the wild and up to 16 years in captivity.
- People in some parts of the world hunt this frog because of its meat. Despite that, American bullfrog is far from being endangered.
- It has high reproduction rate and ability to easily conquer new habitat.
- The American bullfrog managed to exterminate 100 native species of frogs via predation, competition for food and by spreading fungal diseases. The bullfrog belongs to the group of 100 most invasive species in the world.

If you would like to see an American Bullfrog come to The Grove's Science Room and see our army of Bullfrogs. You can also "Be a Buddy" to a wonderful bullfrog and support their feedings and care. Just ask one of our staff in our gift shop when you visit.

