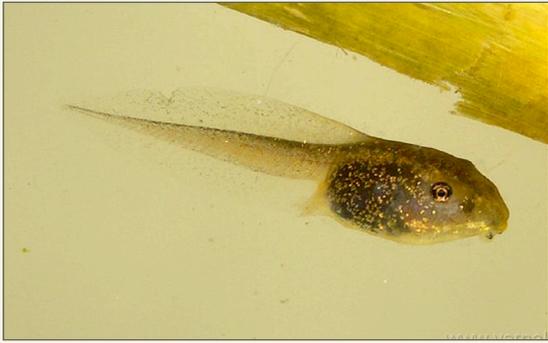




Photo by Joshua Ream



Bottom pic from www.vernapool.org

DISTRIBUTION

This species is widespread throughout northern North America and the only amphibian found north of the Arctic Circle. It has been documented on the mainland of Southeast Alaska and throughout Central Alaska to at least Anaktuvuk Pass at the crest of the Brooks Range (sightings of frogs farther north and east on the North Slope have yet to be validated), westward to the Kobuk River Valley, and southward to the base of the Alaska Peninsula, but is apparently absent from Prince William Sound. A localized population of Wood Frogs on Douglas Island near Juneau are suspected transplants, and a specimen reported from Mitkof Island was later re-identified as a Columbia Spotted Frog. Wood Frogs survive the rigors of northern winters by hibernating in small nests under the forest litter and snow, their bodies able to freeze and thaw without bursting by concentrating glucose antifreeze in and around cells.

(Information cited: www.alaskaherps.info / S. O. MacDonald)



Photo by Joshua Ream

ALASKA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The Alaska Herpetological Society is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the field of Herpetology in the State of Alaska. Our mission is to promote sound research and management of amphibians and reptiles in the North and to provide opportunities in outreach, education, and citizen science for individuals who are interested in these species.

WEB:

WWW.AKHERPSOCIETY.ORG

FACEBOOK:

ALASKA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

WOOD FROG

Lithobates sylvaticus



Photo by Joshua Ream

INFORMATION

This information on the Wood Frog (*Lithobates sylvaticus*) has been provided by the Alaska Herpetological Society.

You can help locate this species on our website, via a voucher or via the epicollect app. See www.akherpsociety.org for more information.

Wood Frog Information

ADULT

Adults are 3.1-8.1cm (1.25-3.25 in) from snout to vent. Have a dark “eye mask” that is flanked by a white or cream jaw stripe. Smooth skin. Some individuals have a light stripe along the spine. Underside is white or cream. They have dorsolateral ridges - two raised lines running down their back. The thumb base of males is dark and enlarged.

TADPOLE

Tadpoles are 5 cm (2 in) long; uniformly dark underside, high dorsal fin, few markings on fins, dark body, dusky color with green sheen, underside cream color with hints of pink.

EGGS

Laid in 6.2-16cm (2.5-6 in) firm clusters, 100-3000 eggs per cluster (780 average), in shallow ponds, lakes or slow moving streams, near surface either floating freely or attached to vegetation, many clusters often located in close proximity.

FACTS

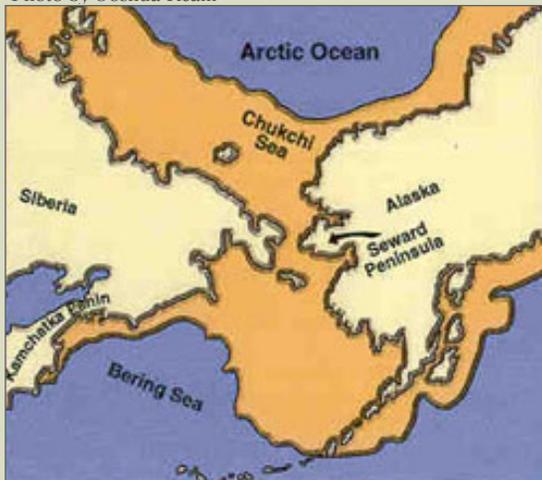
Wood Frogs can be found far from water, in open forest, grassland, tundra and muskeg! The Wood Frog is most easily recognized by its “robber mask.” This black band stretched past both eyes to the eardrums.

They are the most widespread of Alaska Amphibians and are even expected to occur on the North Slope, north of the Brooks Range. They produce anti-freeze to keep the inside of their cells from freezing in the winter!

Their voice is a “rapidly repeating duck-like staccato.” They are often confused for ducks!



Photo by Joshua Ream



Bering Land Bridge picture from www.nps.gov

DID YOU KNOW...

That Wood Frogs are suspected to have moved across the Bering Land Bridge to Alaska during the last ice age? Indigenous peoples in Alaska therefore have interacted with this species for thousands of years across the state. Gwich'in Athabaskans tell a story whereby two children injured a Wood Frog causing it to bruise and leading it to the dark eye mask of this species. Because these children subsequently experienced bad luck, the Gwich'in today respect the Wood Frog and take great care not to injure them.

After spawning, these frogs quickly leave the water and disperse over the surrounding countryside to forage and hibernate under the snow in shallow depressions of compacted forest litter.



Photo by Joshua Ream

HANDLING AMPHIBIANS

It is actually illegal in the State of Alaska to handle or remove Native amphibians from their habitat without a scientific collection permit.

Handling them can increase the spread of disease and allows deadly chemicals like bug spray and sunscreen to easily penetrate their permeable skin. Removing them can hurt populations and change their genetic structure. Never move amphibians from place to place.

When possible, scrub boots, waders, nets and other equipment with a 5% bleach solution between sites or when you return home. This helps to stop the spread of diseases like chytrid fungus which has been identified in Alaska and can cause mass amphibian mortality.

Also, never release a pet amphibian into the wild!