



What's the Deal with Bullfrogs?

Did you know?

Did you know that the non-native and invasive American Bullfrog (*Lithobates catesbeianus*) can cause serious harm to wetlands? Bullfrogs are known for their voracious appetites, eating almost anything they can fit in their large mouths, including other frogs, turtles, birds, and insects. In their native ranges of Eastern and Central North America, large aquatic predators of the Bullfrog provide a natural balance to their populations. Here in the Fraser Valley, Bullfrogs are mostly unchallenged at the top of the wetland food-chain, and their populations easily grow and spread beyond ecosystem capacities. It is for these reasons the Bullfrog is widely recognized as one of the world's worst invasive species and why a Bullfrog invasion is a serious concern to sensitive wetland ecosystems, especially those containing native species already at risk.

Who's that Frog?

Many people confuse the American Bullfrog with the native Western Toad or other larger frogs. **Do not think that *Bullfrog* is referring to any large frog! Our native toads are NOT Bullfrogs!**

Who's Who in our world of Big Frogs:

Western Toad



- White/yellow line down the back
- Large bumps on skin
- Can be black, brown, or green
- Quiet during the summer

NATIVE species: Needs our help

Bullfrog



- Very large ear drum next to eye
- Fold of skin tucks around ear drum
- Smooth, green or brown skin
- Loud "barrum barrum" call at night

INVASIVE species: Causing harm

You can identify frogs in the Fraser Valley using the simple guides here:

<http://fraservalleyconservancy.ca/stewardship>



Where are Bullfrogs in the Fraser Valley?

It's hard to say exactly where Bullfrogs are located in the Fraser Valley as very few records exist in provincial databases. As an invasive species thought to be widespread, the Bullfrog often goes unreported. Many beloved wetlands in the region have Bullfrogs including Mill Lake Park in Abbotsford and Sardis Pond in Chilliwack. Some areas have yet to see a Bullfrog invasion, including the Cheam Lake Wetlands Regional Park.

How are the Bullfrogs spreading?

Bullfrogs are spreading across the Fraser Valley in two main ways: human introduction and migration. Human introduction happens when people move Bullfrogs from one area to another. Unfortunately, people may not realize they are causing serious harm to local wildlife when they move these invasive species around. Many new populations of Bullfrogs are directly linked to unknowing citizens transporting tadpoles or frogs from wetland to wetland, or to their own backyard ponds. Bullfrogs can migrate distances greater than one kilometer over dry land to reach a new pond.

Never move amphibians, including their eggs or tadpoles, from one area to another.

What can be done about the Bullfrogs?

It is widely believed that permanently removing Bullfrogs once they have become established in an area is extremely difficult. It is therefore imperative that we prevent new infestations in the Fraser Valley. In highly sensitive areas with species at risk such as the Oregon Spotted Frog (*Rana pretiosa*) or Northern Red-legged Frog (*Rana aurora*), it may be necessary to engage in Bullfrog control projects. **These projects must be conducted in consultation with species experts and are not feasible in most situations.**

Ultimately, the best way we can manage the impacts from Bullfrogs in the Fraser Valley is to enhance the habitat available for our native species. Protecting natural spaces, planting native trees and shrubs, and creating corridors for wildlife will help ease the pressures Bullfrogs place on local ecosystems.

How can I help?

The most important thing you can do is help stop the spread of invasive species. Learn how to identify frogs and share your knowledge with your friends and neighbours. Submit your amphibian observations to our [Fraser Valley Frog Finders](#) project to help us learn where native species need help, and where Bullfrogs are spreading across the valley.

For more information on amphibian identification, habitat enhancement, or Bullfrog control, please contact the Fraser Valley Conservancy.