

FROG & TOAD



Chug-o-rum! Peep-peeep-peeep! Kraack-arrack!

Frogs and toads thrive in the many ponds, forests, fields and open woodlands found on Audubon wildlife refuges. Spring and summer are great times to look and listen for them. Listed below are the common species found in Rhode Island.



Bullfrog *(Rana catesbeiana)*

Bullfrogs are the largest frog in the United States and have smooth, dull green to brown skin with dark spots. Males have a yellow chin, and females have a white chin. Males make a deep echoing croak “Chug-o-rum, Chug-o-rum” call in early summer. It can sound like a cow mooing, which is why the word “bull” is in its name. They eat many insects, but will also eat fish, rodents and small birds.



Green Frog *(Rana clamitans)*

Green frogs greatly resemble bullfrogs, with a bright green head and shoulders and hints of brown, blue or black, but can be distinguished by the raised ridges down their backs. They sound like the twanging of a banjo string. There can be one or a series of plunks. When frightened, they emit a high-pitched “EEP” to startle predators. Green frogs like water insects and those flying just above the surface like dragonflies.



Wood Frog *(Rana sylvatica)*

Wood frogs are a medium-sized frog with a dark “face mask” which makes it easy to identify them. Females are reddish-brown, and males are greenish-brown. The call of a wood frog is often compared with the sound of a quacking duck: “kraack-arrack.” Males inflate their armpits rather than their throats when vocalizing. This frog can freeze solid in winter then thaw out in spring! These frogs live in the woods most of the year, thus their name.



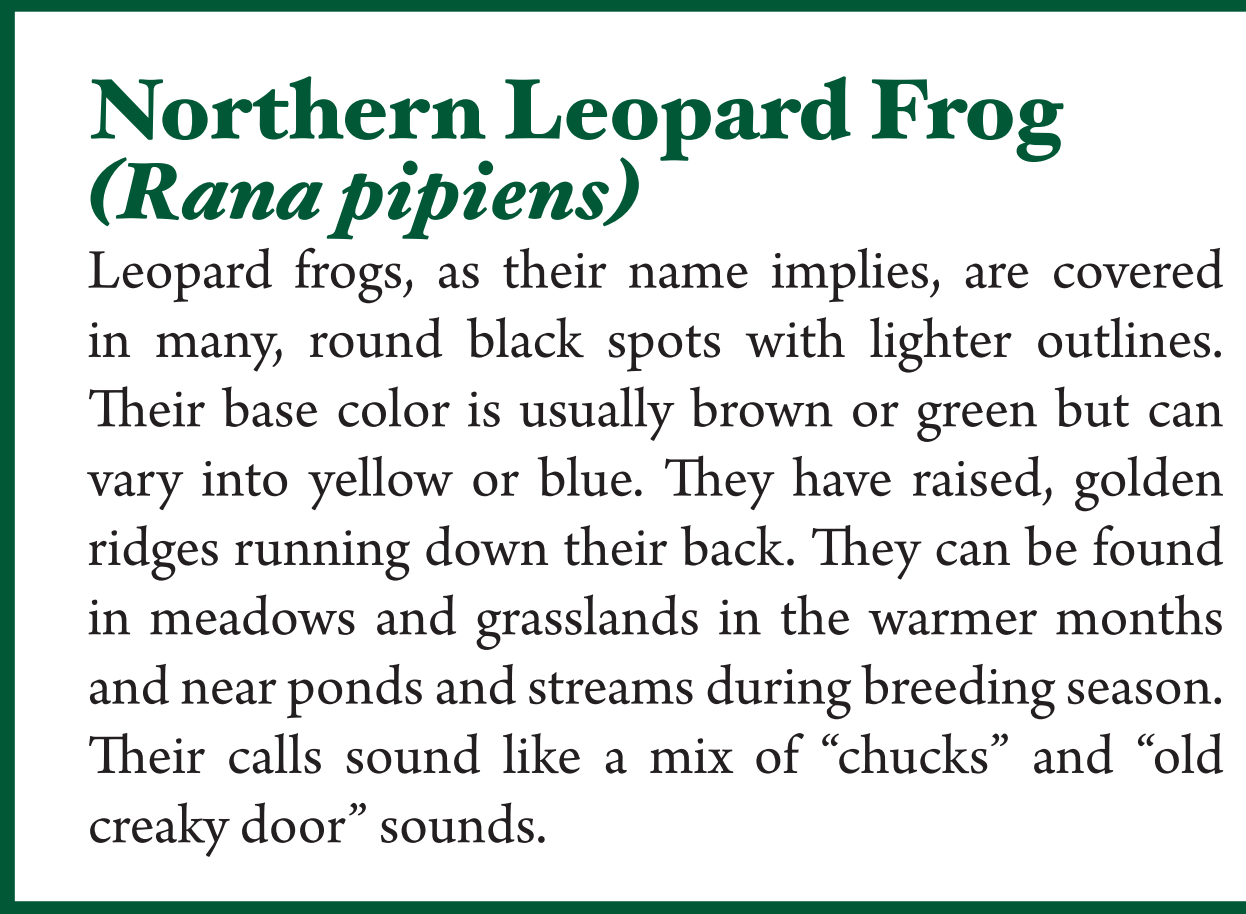
Spring Peeper *(Pseudacris crucifer)*

Spring peepers are quite tiny –only ¾ to 1 inch long. These chorus frogs are gray to light brown with an “X” on their back. Despite their size, they have an extremely loud, high trilling pond chorus in early spring that sounds like “Peep-peeep-peeep”. Lacking the toe pads of a true tree frog, peepers can be found occupying shrubs and small trees up to six feet off the ground.



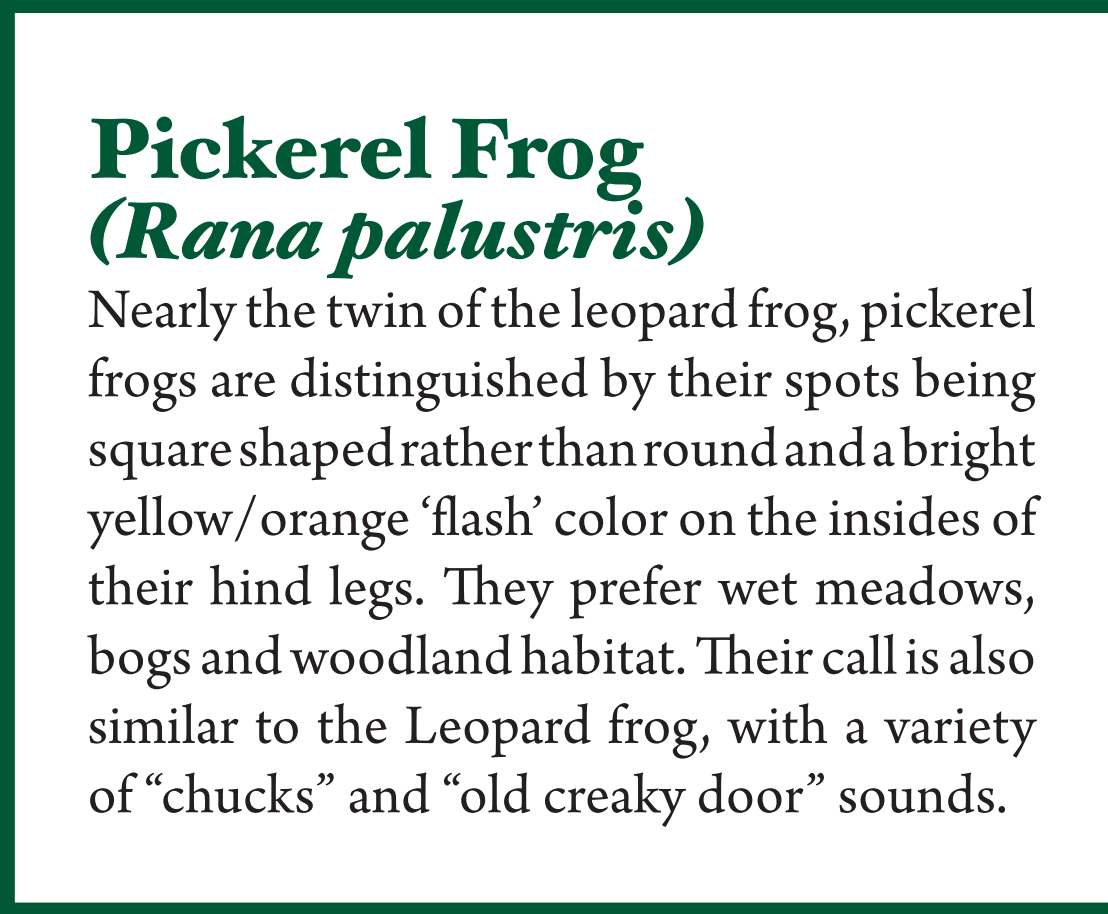
Gray Tree Frog *(Hyla versicolor)*

Eastern Gray Tree frogs are masters of camouflage. Their smooth skin resembles patches of lichen and moss. On the underside of their legs, they are a vibrant yellow color and have enlarged sticky pads on each toe that helps them cling to the bark of trees. They produce a chittering trill call in mid-spring to early summer. They live in trees almost their whole lives.



Northern Leopard Frog *(Rana pipiens)*

Leopard frogs, as their name implies, are covered in many, round black spots with lighter outlines. Their base color is usually brown or green but can vary into yellow or blue. They have raised, golden ridges running down their back. They can be found in meadows and grasslands in the warmer months and near ponds and streams during breeding season. Their calls sound like a mix of “chucks” and “old creaky door” sounds.



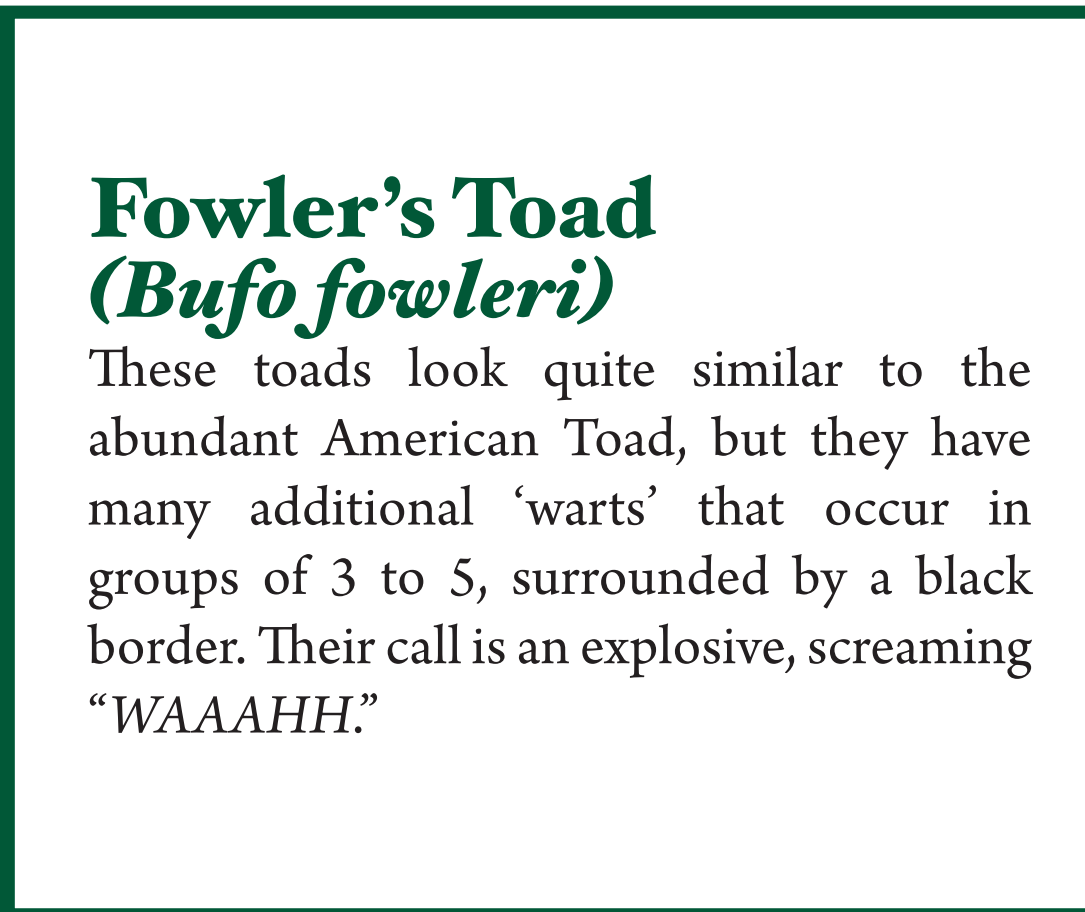
Pickerel Frog *(Rana palustris)*

Nearly the twin of the leopard frog, pickerel frogs are distinguished by their spots being square shaped rather than round and a bright yellow/orange ‘flash’ color on the insides of their hind legs. They prefer wet meadows, bogs and woodland habitat. Their call is also similar to the Leopard frog, with a variety of “chucks” and “old creaky door” sounds.



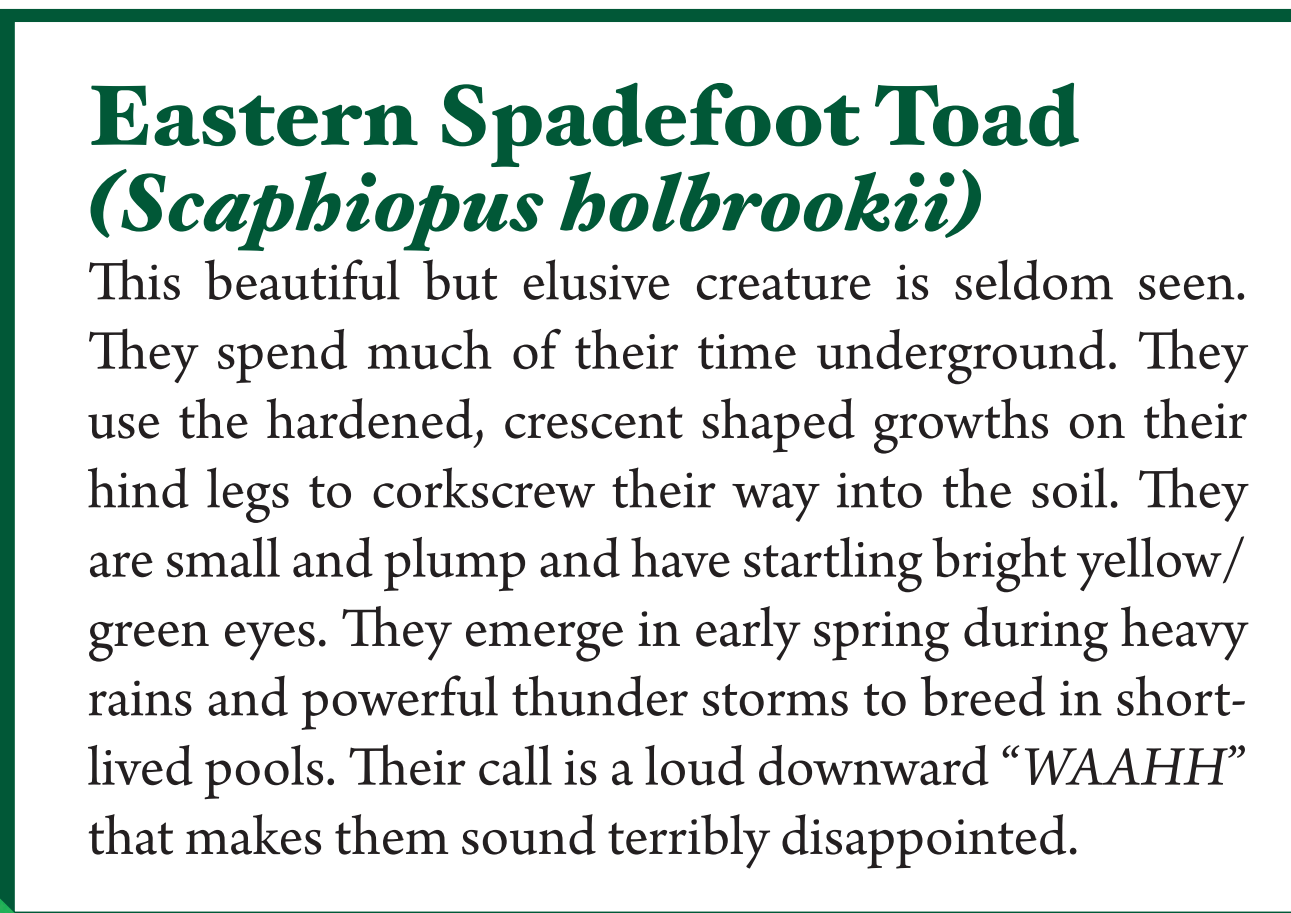
American Toad *(Bufo americanus)*

These stout creatures are a true toad, with short, hopping legs; dry, brown, bumpy skin and large parotid glands behind their eyes that exude toxins when harassed by predators. American toads are largely terrestrial, preferring open woodlands and short grassy areas. They will come to ponds and vernal pools in the spring to lay eggs. Their high-pitched rolling trill can be heard in April during mating season.



Fowler's Toad *(Bufo fowleri)*

These toads look quite similar to the abundant American Toad, but they have many additional ‘warts’ that occur in groups of 3 to 5, surrounded by a black border. Their call is an explosive, screaming “WAAHHH.”



Eastern Spadefoot Toad *(Scaphiopus holbrookii)*

This beautiful but elusive creature is seldom seen. They spend much of their time underground. They use the hardened, crescent shaped growths on their hind legs to corkscrew their way into the soil. They are small and plump and have startling bright yellow/green eyes. They emerge in early spring during heavy rains and powerful thunder storms to breed in short-lived pools. Their call is a loud downward “WAAHH” that makes them sound terribly disappointed.

