



Pickerel Frog



The Pickerel Frog (*Lithobates palustris*) occurs in Eastern Canada, i.e. Ontario, Quebec and the Atlantic Provinces. In Québec, the species can be found in a number of regions and may be more frequently encountered in Estrie, though it is still rare even there. It has been seen in the Sutton Mountains, Orford-Brompton, Watopeka-Weedon, Frontenac and Hereford areas. The species is considered locally common in the Gulf and Au Saumon River valleys. Appalachian Corridor reported this species from a number of locations on its territory.

Key features

Pickerel Frog and Leopard Frog may look alike, but the former displays two parallel rows of rectangular-shaped patches on its back and sides, as well as a bright yellow or orangey colour on the inner side of their hind legs and groin area. This feature is not easily visible seeing as the legs normally cover this coloration (see picture on the right). In addition, Pickerel Frog is often smaller, reaching only 9cm, whereas Leopard Frog can reach up to 11cm. Like other frog species, *Lithobates palustris*, produces skin secretions known to be toxic and aimed at dissuading potential predators.



Biology

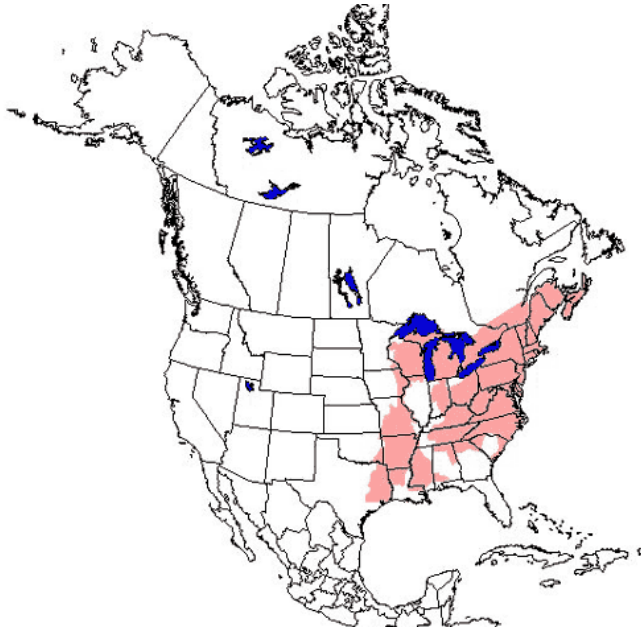
Pickerel Frog is mostly terrestrial in summer but never ventures far from wetlands or waterbodies, being peat bogs, ponds, lakes, streams or rivers. The species feeds on a variety of insects, spiders and other small invertebrates. This frog tends to be found in mountainous or uneven terrain, thus limiting its movements. In winter, Pickerel Frog buries itself into the mud found at the bottom of ponds and shallow watercourses and falls into hibernation, breathing only through its skin. Pickerel Frog breeds in May and June in aquatic habitats. Its eggs are attached to submerged vegetation and will hatch 4 to 21 days after being laid. The metamorphosis of aquatic tadpoles into terrestrial adults takes place in August and September.



Susceptible of being designated Threatened or Vulnerable in Quebec

Although designated as Not in peril by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada, Pickerel Frog is Susceptible of being designated Threatened or Vulnerable by the *Centre de données sur le patrimoine naturel du Québec* (CDPNQ). The main threat affecting

this species is habitat disturbance due to forestry activities, forest fragmentation and wetland drainage. Urban and road development as well as agricultural activities also have a direct impact of Pickerel Frog populations. Potential predators of this species include Common Garter Snake, Great Blue Heron as well as a number of fish.



Distribution area of Pickerel Frog (*Lithobates palustris*) in North America

Source : MRNF, <http://www3.mrnf.gouv.qc.ca>

How you can help protect Pickerel Frog

Pickerel Frog populations are being surveyed throughout its Quebec range and Appalachian Corridor contributes actively to this process. Through the promotion of research projects on its territory and by raising awareness to landowners, Appalachian Corridor aims to protect Pickerel Frog and the natural habitats it relies on. For more information on practical measures to protect Pickerel Frog habitats or to know more about conservation tools available to landowners for the protection of natural habitats in perpetuity, please contact your local conservation group or land trust, or email the Appalachian Corridor team by email at info@corridorappalachien.ca or by phone 450-297-1145.

Sources

Gouvernement du Québec. 2007-2009. *Liste des espèces fauniques menacées ou vulnérables au Québec, Grenouille des marais*. Ressources naturelles et faune.

Atlas des amphibiens et reptiles du Québec. 2009. *Grenouille des marais, Pickerel Frog*, *Lithobates (Rana) palustris*. Société d'Histoire Naturelle de la Vallée du Saint-Laurent et du ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune. Available online (accessed on 30th January 2010):

http://www.atlasamphibiensreptiles.qc.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=23&Itemid=30

Appalachian Corridor is a conservation organisation with a mission to implement, in collaboration with Nature Conservancy Quebec and local conservation organisations, a transborder conservation strategy for the protection of a natural corridor extending from the Green Mountains of Vermont to Mount Orford, passing through the Sutton Mountains in the Eastern Townships. The following partners support Appalachian Corridor's global vision: Mount Echo Conservation Association, Association pour la conservation de la nature de Stukely-Sud, Ruitier Valley Land Trust, Parc d'environnement naturel de Sutton, Mount Pinnacle Land Trust, Alderbrooke Marsh Land Trust, Memphremagog Wetlands Foundation, Brome Lake Land Foundation, Société de conservation du corridor naturel de la rivière au Saumon, Conservation des vallons de la Serpentine, Société de protection foncière du lac Montjoie, Les Sentiers de l'Estrie, Conservation Espace Nature Shefford and Massawippi Conservation Trust.
