



For More Information Contact

wildlifecontrol@spca.bc.ca
BC SPCA Animal Helpline
1.855.622.7722

BCSPCA
SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

BULLFROGS & GREEN FROGS

WILDLIFE CONTROL BEST PRACTICES

Species

Bullfrogs (*Lithobates catesbeianus*) and
Green frogs (*Lithobates clamitans*)

Legal Designation

Schedule C, *BC Wildlife Act*

Disease Risks

While there are a number of infectious diseases threatening native amphibians, these diseases do not pose a risk to people



Bullfrog

Native Frogs vs. Introduced Invasive Frogs

BC has 11 native species of frogs and toads that are protected under the *BC Wildlife Act* and/or the *Species at Risk Act*. It is illegal to kill, collect, or harass them in any way without a permit. Bullfrogs and green frogs are exotic species that were introduced to BC and have become invasive.

Common Conflicts

Invasive frogs place enormous pressure on native frog and toad populations – they can spread infectious diseases to native amphibians, bullfrogs prey on native amphibians and other wildlife, and green frogs compete with native species for habitat. Green frogs and bullfrogs may take up residence in backyard pond habitats. Bullfrogs are known for their loud calling in summer months.

Conflict Prevention

Frogs and tadpoles should not be relocated. Humane killing of bullfrogs and green frogs may be necessary to limit their spread and damage to ecosystems – these frogs are not candidates for wildlife rehabilitation or release.



INVASIVE SPECIES
AVERAGE LENGTH
Bullfrog 100-175 mm



NATIVE SPECIES
AVERAGE LENGTH
Red-legged frog 70-100 mm





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Green frog, Photo Credit: Philip Warburton



RECOMMENDED

Actions & methods for control

To prevent accidentally creating bullfrog habitat, avoid converting temporary wetlands into permanent ponds – this allows bullfrogs to complete their life cycle. Temporary or semi-permanent wetlands should retain water for approximately three months for the benefit of native species. Bullfrogs and green frogs lay eggs later than native species. Bullfrogs lay eggs on the surface of water in July, the eggs hatch in a few days and tadpoles remain in ponds through the summer and winter. Where bullfrogs are a problem, drain ponds at the end of summer to prevent bullfrogs from completing their life cycle.

Bullfrogs and green frogs can be captured using gloved hands, nets, buckets, or using funnel or pitfall traps. To kill them humanely, apply topical 10-20% benzocaine (e.g. Orajel™) to the frogs' backs, or immerse them in benzocaine hydrochloride (min. 250 mg/L), buffered tricaine mesylate (MS-222, TMS) solution (pH 7-7.5), or aqueous clove oil (~20 drops/1 L water). Deep anesthesia (no reflex from toe pinching or flipping on back) should occur in 15-30 minutes, and be followed by a second killing method to ensure death.



NOT RECOMMENDED

Actions & methods for control

The BC SPCA does not recommended these methods for killing bullfrogs. Although these methods are legal, they are not recommended as they can cause suffering, may be high risk to non-target animals, and/or are difficult to administer. Check local bylaws and/or regulations to confirm whether the method is legal in a municipality.

- Blunt force trauma
- Gunshot



ILLEGAL

Actions & methods for control

- Carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide
- Decapitation (without anesthesia followed by pithing)
- Freezing (including dry ice)
- Immersion in alcohol
- Immersion in alka-seltzer solution
- Inhalant anesthetics
- Pithing (without anesthesia)
- Poison

Know your species

Native species of frogs and toads are protected under the **BC Wildlife Act** and/or the **Species at Risk Act**. It is illegal to kill, collect, or harass them in any way without a permit. Bullfrogs and green frogs are generally much larger than BC's native frogs, and toads can be distinguished by their dry, warty skin.

Western toad, Photo Credit: Inge Riis

