

HOP TO IT!! GUNFLINT TRAIL FROGS & TOADS



INTRODUCTION

Many different frogs and toads call the puddles, ponds, and low areas of the Gunflint Trail home. Frog-like creatures date back to the time of the dinosaurs. Over the years, frogs and toads have developed many fascinating characteristics, like an ability to make noise to attract mates or change body colors to camouflage themselves from predators. Frogs absorb and release water through their skin, making them sensitive to environmental changes like pollution. All frogs and toads hibernate during the winter.

WHAT'S IN THE FROGS & TOADS ACTIVITY BIN:

- Frog Life Cycle Kit
- Frog Calls Kit
- 50-foot length of rope
- Reptiles and Amphibians guide

NOTES FOR FROG & TOAD ACTIVITIES:

- Activity requires approximately 30-60 minutes.
- Use bin inside or out.
- Do not remove bin from Chik-Wauk grounds
- Check out bin at museum front desk, if using bin outside on Chik-Wauk grounds.
- Remember, if you see a frog or toad, don't move it from the place where you found it. These are wild animals, not pets.



FROG OR TOAD?

Use the following photos and descriptions to help you identify the common frogs and toads that live along the Gunflint Trail. You can see for yourself if the creature you spotted was a frog...or a toad!.

Frogs and Toads of the Gunflint Trail

AMERICAN TOAD:

2-4" in size. You won't get warts by touching this toad, but it may urinate or secrete a nasty smelling fluid if you pick it up.



LEOPARD FROG:

2-3 1/2" in size, has green, green/brown mix, and brown morphs.



CHORUS FROG:

3/4 - 1" in size, has green and brown morphs.



MINK FROG:

2-3" in size. Spends most of its life in water. Produces an onion-like smell when handled. Phew!



GRAY TREEFROG:

1 1/4 - 2 1/2" in size, changes color from gray to green. It produces a sticky substance that allows it to climb smooth surfaces.



SPRING PEEPER:

3/4 - 1 1/4" in size, with a distinctive X marking on its back.



GREEN FROG:

2-4" in size, often seen near water.



WOOD FROG:

1-3" in size, has yellow, red, and brown morphs.



(A morph refers to the different color variations that occur within the same species.)

LIFE CYCLE

Frogs are a type of amphibian, an animal capable of living in water or on land. Appropriately, the term amphibian comes from a Greek word that means “two lives.”

All amphibians, including salamanders and newts, spend most of their lives near water. Generally, frogs spend most of their lives in water, while toads spend most of their lives on land.

Frogs begin their lives in water. Adult female frogs lay masses of eggs in water. These eggs hatch into tadpoles. Tadpoles live in water, using gills that allow them to breathe underwater like fish and tails to help them swim. When they grow into adult frogs, the tadpoles exchange their tails and gills for legs and lungs, allowing them to live on land or in water.

ACTIVITY

Take the Frog Life Cycle Kit out of the pack. Match up the graphics representing each stage of the frog’s life cycle— egg, baby tadpole, grows back legs, grows front legs, and frog — with the appropriately labeled section of the plate.

HOP TO IT!

Frogs' strong hind legs help them jump on land and swim in water. Most frogs can jump about 10 times their length, although many can leap 20 times their length. Toads' shorter and weaker hind legs keep them from jumping as far as frogs.

ACTIVITY

Can you hop as far as a frog?

Take the length of rope out of the pack and find a flat area where you can lay out the entire rope on the ground in a straight line. (Try the Boardwalk or Amikwiish hiking trails.) Stand near the end of the rope with a number of colored markings.

The rope is 50 feet long and black tape marks 5 feet intervals. Red tape marks 12 inches from the start of the ropes and shows how far a spring peeper would hop if it hopped 10 times its length. Blue tape marks 35 inches from the start of the rope and shows how far a green frog would hop if it hopped 20 times its length.

See if you can hop as far as spring peeper and green frog.

Now jump as far as you can. Use the 5 ft. black tape indicators on the rope to guesstimate how far you jumped. Think about how tall you are. Can you figure out how many times you just jumped your own length?

Look at the very end of the rope. That's how far someone who was 5 feet tall would have to jump to jump 10 times their length. Even Olympic athletes can't jump more than 30 feet.

SINGING FROGS?

We often hear frogs when we can't see them. Frogs and toads use croaks to attract mates during breeding season and are the only amphibians that make such noises. Frogs croak most during the earlier part of their breeding season.

ACTIVITY

Frog in your throat?

Mimic frogs' croaks using everyday objects in the Frog Calling Kit inside the pack.

CHORUS FROG: Run your finger over the teeth of the comb. Chorus frogs call from late March well into August. They usually call in groups, or choruses.

GREEN FROG: Take a rubber band and stretch it over the plastic cup. Pluck the part of rubber band that's stretched over the cup's opening. Green frogs call from the end of May until early August.

LEOPARD FROG: Blow up a small balloon and run your finger over the balloon. Leopard frogs call from mid-April into early June.

MINK FROG: Gently tap two sticks together to make a "tok, tok, tok" sound. Mink frogs make this sound while floating on the water's surface from mid-June into early August.

SPRING PEEPERS: Shake the plastic bag with jingle bells. Like their name indicates, this frog starts calling early in the spring. Peepers "sing" from late March until early June.

WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED USING THIS ACTIVITY PACK!

Please put everything you pulled out back into the bin and place the bin back where you found it so it's ready for next person. Thank you!