

# Stop

# The Invasion



Photographs courtesy of Peter Eimon and Brian Gratwicke

## African Clawed Frog

*Xenopus laevis*

Report Sightings

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[InvasiveSpecies.wa.gov](http://InvasiveSpecies.wa.gov)

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### What are they?

African clawed frogs are predatory aquatic frogs that are highly adaptable to diverse environmental conditions including freezing and droughts. They reproduce so rapidly that they can double their population and range within 10 years.

### Are they here yet?

Yes. African clawed frogs currently infest two separate watersheds in Washington State. They have entered the state through the aquarium and pet trades, and possibly via release after being used in science classes.

### Why should I care?

African clawed frogs harm native ecosystems by competing with native species. They also have the potential to introduce harmful pathogens that hurt native amphibian and fish populations, including salmon. This decreases recreational fishing potential, in addition to the need to quarantine infested water bodies and close them off to public use.

### What should I do if I find one?

Report a sighting online at [www.invasivespecies.wa.gov/report.shtml](http://www.invasivespecies.wa.gov/report.shtml).

### How can we stop them?

Do not purchase or keep African clawed frogs as a pet—they are a prohibited species. Above all, do not release an unwanted pet or scientific specimen into the wild.



Photograph courtesy of Gregory Moine

## What are their characteristics?

- Up to about 5 inches long, not including their legs.
- Smooth-skinned and plump.
- Range in color from mottled grey to brown, with a pale underbelly.
- Hind feet are particularly large, with clawed toes.

## How do I distinguish them from native species?

- Native frogs tend to only inhabit water to breed, otherwise living on land, but near water.
- Native frogs are smaller, rougher-textured and less plump-looking.
- Look up native species (Pacific treefrogs, red-legged frogs, Columbia spotted frogs, Oregon spotted frogs, Cascade frogs) for individual distinguishing details.

## Where do I get more information?

- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife: [http://wdfw.wa.gov/ais/xenopus\\_laevis/](http://wdfw.wa.gov/ais/xenopus_laevis/)
- AmphibianWeb: [www.amphibiaweb.org/cgi/amphib\\_query?where-genus=Xenopus&where-species=laevis](http://www.amphibiaweb.org/cgi/amphib_query?where-genus=Xenopus&where-species=laevis)

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