

Blanchard's cricket frog *Acris crepitans*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Amphibia

Order: Anura

Family: Hylidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

Blanchard's cricket frog averages about one-half to one and one-half inches in length. Its body color is light brown, black, olive, tan or gray. The skin is warty. A dark triangle is present between the eyes, and a dark stripe is found on the rear surface of each thigh. A tiny, adhesive pad is present on the tip of each toe of the webbed feet. A light line is present from each eye to each shoulder, and there are light bars on the nose.

BEHAVIORS

The cricket frog may be found statewide in Illinois. It lives along the edges of streams, ponds and ditches. This treefrog does not live in trees. It is generally active during the day, but in the summer, it may be active at night, too. This amphibian is fairly tolerant of cold and may be active in the winter if the weather is not too severe. It is a tremendous leaper for its size. The cricket frog breeds from late April through summer. The male's call is a metallic "glick, glick, glick" that sounds like two small rocks being hit together. The female deposits up to 400 eggs either singly or in small, filmy packets on the water's surface. A few days later the eggs hatch into tadpoles that have black-tipped tails. Metamorphosis (change to the land-based form) occurs from five to ten weeks after hatching. The cricket frog feeds on arthropods (spiders, mites, insects and others), particularly insects.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests; lakes, ponds and reservoirs; marshes; peatlands; rivers and streams; swamps; temporary water supplies; wet prairies and fens

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; dolomite prairie; edge; gravel prairie; hill prairie; sand prairie; shrub prairie

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