

pickerel frog *Lithobates palustris*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Amphibia

Order: Anura

Family: Ranidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The pickerel frog averages one and three-fourths to three inches in length. It has two parallel rows of square or rectangular brown or black blotches along the back between the yellow, dorsolateral folds. The body is gray or tan. The concealed parts of the hind legs and often the belly have a wash of bright yellow color.

BEHAVIORS

The pickerel frog may be found in northern Illinois and along the Mississippi River. It lives in permanent water that is not warm or sluggish such as bogs, mouths of caves, ponds, creeks, marshes and cold springs. This frog may wander into grassy areas in summer. The pickerel frog is a wary, alert, powerful jumper. Secretions from glands in its skin make this frog distasteful to many organisms. The pickerel frog spawns in spring in bogs, lakes and swamps. The male's call is a short, low-pitched snore with little carrying power. The female deposits 1,000 to 2,000 eggs in globular masses. Eggs hatch in about two weeks. Transformation to the land-based form occurs by the end of June. The pickerel frog eats arthropods (spiders, insects, mites and others) and mollusks (snails, slugs and others).

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; marshes; peatlands; rivers & streams; wet prairies & fens

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; coniferous forest

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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