WESTERN CHORUS FROG

Pseudacris triseriata

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Physical characteristics

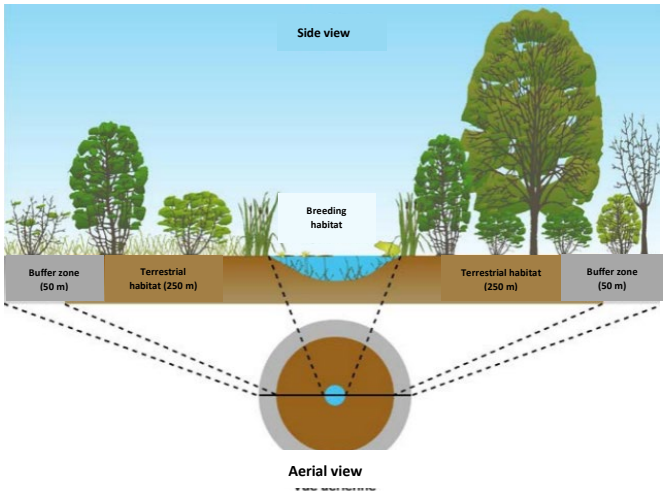
The western chorus frog measures 2 to 4 cm in length. It varies in colour from pale grey to dark brown and has three dark stripes on its back. During the breeding season, males inflate their yellow vocal sacs.

Diet

Western chorus frog tadpoles, which are exclusively aquatic, feed on microscopic algae, pollen, and small organic particles floating in the water. Adult frogs feed on flies, mosquitoes, ants, small beetles, moths, caterpillars, crickets, spiders, slugs, and snails. Notably, they may prey on crop-damaging insects. During the winter, they stop feeding.

Habitat

The western chorus frog can live in a variety of habitats, such as clearings, flooded meadows, fallow fields, temporary ponds, marshes, swamps, drainage ditches, and low-intensity farmland such as hayfields, pastures, and other open areas.

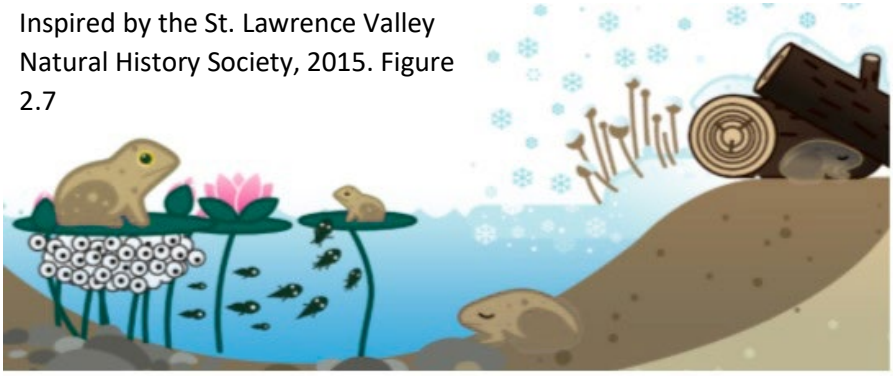


During the breeding season, this species is primarily found in temporary, shallow wetlands with lots of vegetation (where the tadpoles are safe from predators such as fish). Temporary wetlands used as breeding grounds generally dry up by mid-July, allowing the frogs to feed and avoid predators.

Periods of vulnerability

- The breeding period takes place in the spring when the snow melts.
- The eggs form small clusters on aquatic vegetation and incubate in less than 15 days.
- Depending on the temperature, it can take up to two months for tadpoles to grow into froglets.

Inspired by the St. Lawrence Valley Natural History Society, 2015. Figure 2.7



WESTERN CHORUS FROG

Pseudacris triseriata

Threats

- Habitat destruction and fragmentation, which pose the greatest risk to the species.
- Diminished health and vitality due to the drying, filling, and draining of wetlands, which are essential for the species' reproduction.
- High nitrate levels from fertilizers, which interfere with hatching and growth.

Sustainable practices

- Promote perennial crops:
  - This mitigates the loss of breeding habitat and enhances habitat connectivity, which allows western chorus frogs to move between potential breeding sites.
- Create filtering or herbaceous riparian buffers:
  - This reduces fertilizer and pesticide runoff into watercourses where western chorus frogs live and breed.
  - It also increases the surface area of higher-humidity environments, creating the ideal conditions for the western chorus frog to thrive.
- Allow water to drain naturally from fields (avoid drainage):
  - This will help minimize habitat disturbance and destruction and thus promote the species' recovery.
- Adopt frog-friendly mowing patterns:
  - Leave some areas untouched to serve as a refuge for western chorus frogs. It's also good practice to avoid mowing in depressions where water accumulates from snowmelt, causing the ground to remain damp for longer in the summer.

- As of 2023, **threatened** species listed on Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act*
- Recovery strategy: wildlife-species.canada.ca/species-risk-registry/virtual_sara/files/plans/Rs-WesternChorusFrogGLSLBC-v00-2015Dec01_e.pdf

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