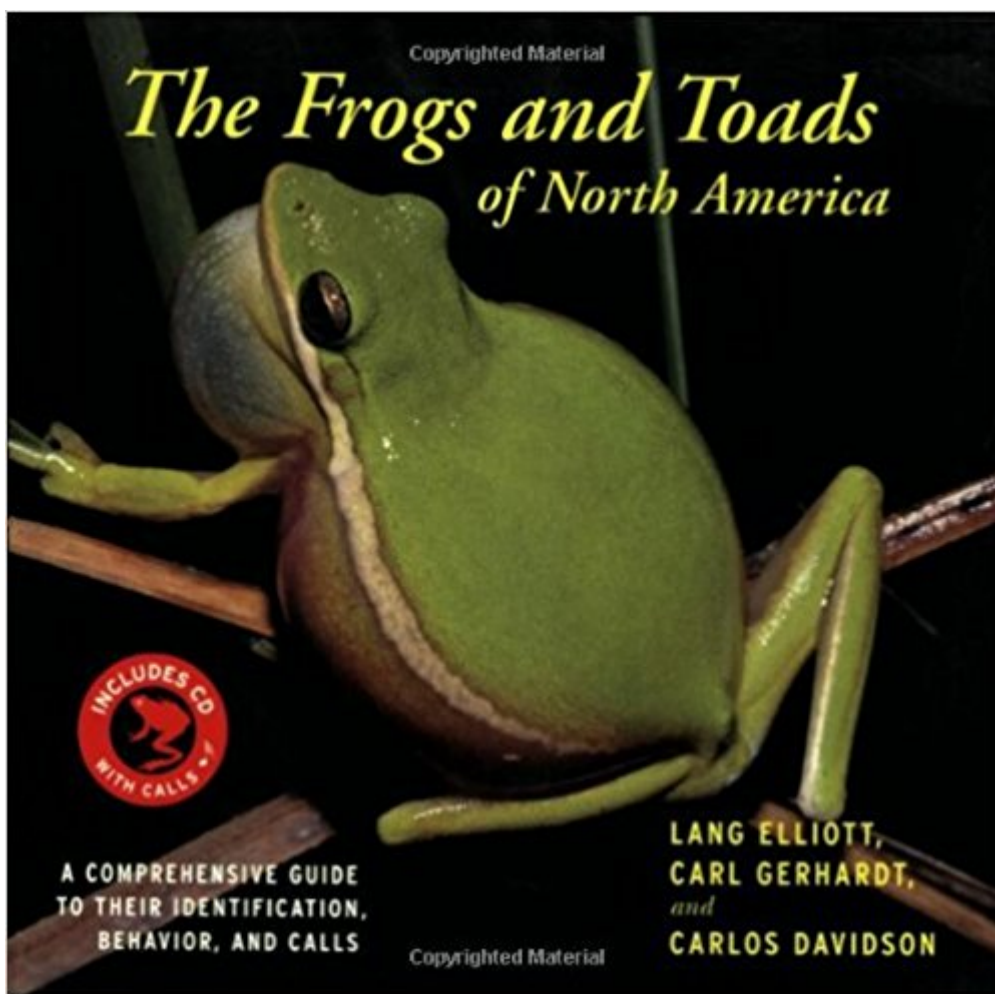


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The Frogs And Toads Of North America: A Comprehensive Guide To Their Identification, Behavior, And Calls



Synopsis

The Frogs and Toads of North America

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Product Description A beautiful and comprehensive photo-filled guide that is the first to show all of the frogs of North America and includes a CD of their calls. Colorful and noisy early indicators of environmental distress, frogs and toads are fascinating to casual nature lovers as well as expert herpetologists. Covering all 101 species in the United States and Canada, this book contains natural history information, identification tips, range and habitat information, summaries of behavior, and descriptions of calls. A 70-minute audio compact disc includes the calls of nearly every species and makes fascinating listening for any nature lover. The book also has sections on conservation issues, public participation in census programs, photography and sound recording, and keeping frogs and toads as pets. From the olive-and-black Pig Frog, which gets its name from its low-pitched, piglike grunt, to the X-marked and familiar-sounding Spring Peeper, the superb photographs and high-quality field recordings combine with the informative text to make this a must-have book for every naturalist. A Look (and Listen) Inside The Frogs and Toads of North America Click on an image below to sample one of the many different frog and toad calls from the accompanying CD.

Pines Barrens Tree Frogs Woodhouses Toad Wood Frogs

The title says it all for this beautiful field guide to all 101 species of frogs and toads found in the U.S. and Canada. Elliott has produced a masterpiece of photographs and particulars of all our native and

introduced toads and frogs. Each species is covered in a minimum two-page spread, with common and Latin names, a range map, and a short discussion of appearance, range and habitat, behavior, and voice. All species accounts are illustrated with exquisite close-up photos, many of which show calling males, while others illustrate the various color morphs some species exhibit. The major strength of this book, and one that almost demands its purchase, is the accompanying CD featuring recordings of the calls of every species (with the exception of the two that never vocalize). A lengthy descriptive list of the calls appends the text. The combination of spectacular photography, conversational text, and clear sound recordings make this one an absolute winner. --Nancy Bent

Just to make one thing clear before I proceed: this book is almost entirely about adult anurans. The only times tadpoles are mentioned are in quick references such as the difference in diet as anurans go from their watery tadpole phase to their (relatively) more terrestrial juvenile and adult phases or when discussing keeping anurans of all life stages as pets. If you are looking for information about tadpoles, this is not the book for you. However, if you are primarily interested in identifying the calls you hear as you are out in the wild, the animal you just saw hop (or even walk) across your field of vision, or want to know more about finding North American anurans, this IS the book for you. Collaboratively written by Lang Elliott, Carl Gerhardt, and Carlos Davidson, *The Frogs and Toads of North America* can be viewed as four distinct parts: general information about anurans as a whole, individual species accounts, photographs for identification, and audio recordings of calls. The introduction to this book covers the natural history of anurans as a whole. It discusses subjects such as desiccation, diet, predation, reproduction, and calling. The intro altogether is only around 20 pages or so, but is actually pretty informative. I learned quite a bit that I didn't know, such as how studies suggest that females may in some cases choose males based on similarities in their temperatures as evidenced by how the temporal aspects of the male's call (pulse rates) change depending on ambient temperature. Fascinating! The intro is in effect like a light textbook: informative while still being highly engaging and to the point. The intro also discusses evolution and speciation, giving a good overview (with examples) of how different anurans may resemble each other and not be able to produce viable offspring, or vice versa. It wraps up with discussing the main known causes of amphibian declines worldwide and summarizes what you can do to help minimize harm to these wonderful animals, even recommending some volunteer programs. The end of the book discusses the merits of and tips for catching and keeping anurans as pets. Species accounts are grouped into the nine families of the Order Anura. Within these families accounts are ordered according to similarities between species, followed by degree of abundance, and finally from east to

west. It is more or less easy to follow, but contains a list at the beginning of all species in order for reference both in the book and by the audio tracks (anurans are all numbered, 1 - 99b, which correspond to the audio tracks). The individual accounts have the common name and scientific name of each species, along with any proposed name changes (for example, "Arroyo Toad: *Bufo californicus* (*Anaxyrus californicus*)"; typical SVL (snout to vent length); a range map; a general summary that also includes any current conservation status; a description of the species' appearance; a discussion of its range and habitat and how these have changed historically; a discussion of behavior (mainly breeding tendencies); and a description of the species' vocal call(s). While the species accounts are generally good and are sufficient for quick descriptions and information about each species, one issue I do have is with the range maps. While they are easy to read and are useful with the "range and habitat" section, I would have liked to have seen subspecies distinguished on the maps where applicable. Instead there is a description in the text as to the regional differences of subspecies, when using multiple colors on the maps would have made it even easier. Other than this the information within the species accounts is pretty good, especially when supplemented with the photographs. This book is filled with beautiful close-up photographs of all species from a variety of biologists/photographers. Each species contains at least two photographs in its account, typically three and occasionally as much as six or seven. At least one of the photographs is a full-page photo. When combined with the "appearance" information in the species descriptions, these photos are extremely useful for seeing the specific characteristics to look for in each species. There are also photos in the non-account sections of the book, such as the introduction. The only real bad thing I have to say about the photographs is that even with its much-larger-than-the-usual-field-guide size, the book is too small (length/width) and I wish it were bigger so I could have even bigger versions of these great photographs. Oh well, at least I have *Frog: A Photographic Portrait* for that! :-)

The final part of the book is the CD with the audio calls. Care was taken by the authors to find the best recordings possible for each species (except the two tailed frogs which are not known to vocalize), and let me tell you, these are really helpful. Each track begins with a clear statement of the common and scientific name for the species and then has a good 20-40 seconds on average of various high-quality recordings of the different types of calls taken under different circumstances and from different locations when available. These are very clear and sound great if you are listening with headphones and the calls go into a chorus in all directions around "you" (listen to the pig frog, for example). As an added bonus, the authors have gone to the trouble of annotating the calls for each species in the book, listing who took the recording, when and where it was taken, etc. One thing I think would have helped would have been

to actually say in the recordings what each new call type typically means, rather than just having them all play back-to-back. You can compare with the text in the book, but if you don't have the book with you all you'll know is that that sound is associated with that species, not necessarily what that sound means if you hear it in the field. In summary, if you are looking for a good book to help you identify North American anuran adults by sight or sound or that will help give you a general idea of when and where to find these species, this is a good book for you to try. It is not exhaustive and if you are curious then you will be sure to have further questions after reading. However, it is enough to help you with probably any general inquiries you have or work you may be doing. It is a little on the heavy side and big enough to make kind of inconvenient for putting into a pack, but if you've got the space and a trusty portable media device for playing the calls as you go out looking, this is an invaluable resource to own.

This is the best "Frog and Toad" song and ID book for me! I love Lang Elliott's work - his excellent recordings which are included in a CD with book are fantastic (I loaded them into my phone for use in the field). And as a bonus the photos in this book are absolutely great. It's pretty enough for your coffee table if you are a nature geek and your friends won't laugh at you too hard. Because it covers the whole country, if you don't do a lot of naturalist-oriented travel you could disregard over half the book. But I don't mind. The range maps are good and clear so it's easy to figure out whether a frog is a reasonable possibility in your area or not. If you live in the southwest/Texas area (I don't) you will be amazed at the number of frogs and toads there! If I were homeschooling kids (and subjecting them to my nature geek tendency) this would be a book I would keep around and refer to. I would have loved this book as a kid. I loaded the whole CD onto my phone, but created a playlist with just the frogs in my area so as to avoid confusion in the field. Lang Elliott's other books - especially the Insects one - are equally fabulous. He has taken the nature reference to a whole new level.

I must own every field guide ever written, and they're fine so far as they go. This book, though, is a step above. It's gift-giving quality, if you know somebody who loves the outdoors. The layout is wonderful: photo and information all in one spot. And the photos! They're beautiful. (Also large enough to see without the reading glasses....) A relative goldmine of information about each species, plus some trans-species information about ecology, habitats, and how to go "frogging" responsibly. The CD is icing on the cake--you can "frog by ear" just as you can "bird by ear." Really an excellent addition to my bookshelf and to the bookshelf of anybody who is interested in frogs.

12 stars. Froggy

I would expect to pay more than the price of this book for the cd alone. The book itself is fantastic. It includes at least one photo of every species north of Mexico and multiple photos for the vast majority of species, including full page photos for a lot of species. I'm sure the text in Frogs and Toads of the United States and Canada is more in depth, but I'm also certain that the photos in that book won't come close to the photos in this one (based on the Turtles, Salamanders, and Snakes of the United States and Canada books that I own). At the very least, this is a great temporary substitute until the price on Frogs and Toads of the United States and Canada comes down. And if you already own that book, then your interest in Frogs and Toads is great enough that there's no way you can justify passing on this book and cd for such a low price.

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