Lithobates catesbeianus

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Taxon</th>
<th>Family / Order / Class / Phylum</th>
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<td>Lithobates catesbeianus (Shaw, 1802)</td>
<td>Ranidae / Anura / Amphibia / Vertebrata</td>
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**COMMON NAMES (English only)**
American Bullfrog

**SYNONYMS**
Rana catesbeiana Shaw, 1802

**SHORT DESCRIPTION**
It is the largest North-American ranid. In its natural range, adults can reach at most a 184 mm snout-vent length (Louisiana), while in Europe (southwestern France), adults may exceed a 195 mm snout-vent length, with an average weight of approximately 430 grams. It is likely to feed on a wide range of prey: amphibians, fishes, small mammals, ducklings and small bird species, molluscs, crustaceans and insects. In southwestern France, the adult diet consists of a wide range of prey, with amphibians and insects most prominent.

**BIOLOGY/ECOLOGY**

**Dispersal mechanisms**
Introductions by humans. Natural spread of juveniles and adults is terrestrial or via rivers.

**Reproduction**
In southwestern France, the breeding period begins in May and lasts until early September, and tadpole development takes one to two years.

**Known predators**
In southwestern France, larval and young frog stages seem to undergo significant predation. Known predators include carnivorous fishes, in particular Micropterus salmoides introduced from North America, and probably some Mustelidae and Ardeidae. The main source of predation, in high-density areas, appears to be cannibalism.

**Resistant stages (seeds, spores etc.)**
None.

**HABITAT**

**Native (EUNIS code)**
C: Inland surface water habitats

**Habitat occupied in invaded range (EUNIS code)**
C: Inland surface water habitats, D: Mire, bog and fen habitats

**Habitat requirements**
In its native range, it usually lives in lakes or large ponds. Where introduced, it occupies any type of habitat that is lentic or with slowly moving water, especially if aquatic and bank vegetation are abundant.

**DISTRIBUTION**

**Native Range**
The American Bullfrog is autochthonous in the eastern part of North America, from Vera Cruz north to the Great Lakes and New Brunswick.
Known Introduced Range
It is currently established in the western part of North America, between California and southern British Columbia, as well as in several countries of South America, some islands of the Greater Antilles, Asia, Hawaii and Europe. In Europe, it has been introduced in Germany, Italy, United Kingdom, Spain, the Netherlands, Greece, Belgium and France.

Trend
Although it is presently illegal to import this species to the EU, it can still be ordered on the Internet and shipped worldwide. Farming could increase its distribution area by escapes.

MAP (European distribution)

INTRODUCTION PATHWAY
It has been introduced in many parts of the world, often for farming purposes but also as a predator of unwanted species like insect pests in Hawaii, and sometimes as a pet.

IMPACT
Ecosystem Impact
Where introduced, it has the ability to occupy a whole range of habitats and to feed on many species. A negative impact on native ranids has been notably stressed. American Bullfrogs carry an emerging pathogenic fungus, *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*, which has been implicated in global amphibian decline.

Human Health and Social Impact
Unknown.

Economic Impact
Not documented but the cost of eradication has been US$29 000 in the UK.

MANAGEMENT
Prevention
Unknown.

Mechanical
Except for a limited area in the United Kingdom and France, no eradication strategy has been formulated in Europe. Only few control operations have been attempted (i.e. in Germany). In southwestern France, a long-term regional program was started in May 2003, conducted by Cistude Nature (environment protection...
organization). It aims at the development of strategies and management tools (in particular egg collection, tadpoles trapping, and juvenile and adult shooting) before early 2007, to try to limit American Bullfrog populations, or even to eradicate them.

**Chemical**
Unknown.

**Biological**
Unknown.

**REFERENCES**


**OTHER REFERENCES**


Author: Olivier Lorvelec and Mathieu Détaint

Date Last Modified: November 20th, 2006