



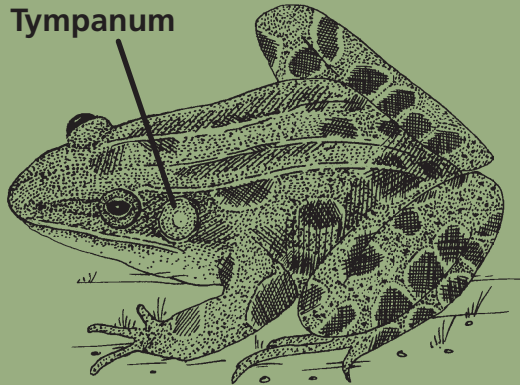
Amphibians of the Swamp...

Amphibians are animals that live a portion of their life in water. Some, like sirens, live their entire life in water. While the word “moist” may carry a negative connotation to some humans, most frogs and toads rely on keeping their skin moist to survive.

Drums in the Night

Start a walk in the swamp at dusk and imagine listening to a symphony orchestra commence a soft prelude with the timpani drums beating with every step. As the sunlight dims, the music crescendos transitioning into the swamp’s own symphony of croaking. Seemingly on cue, males searching for a mate call out for females, veiled from predators in the darkness. Females hear the male serenades with their tympanum, the frog or toad’s outer ear located behind the eye. Amphibians use this tympanum, an ancient word in Greek meaning drum, because it resembles a piece of cloth stretched over a drum.

Tympanum



The tympanum of this Southern leopard frog is identified here. The Southern leopard frog can be distinguished because it has a yellow spot in the center of its tympanum.

Watching wildlife the responsible way...

The thrill of watching a wild animal in its natural surroundings is spectacular and awe-inspiring, but please remember, you are the guest and they are at home.

While visiting Big Cypress National Preserve, or any other natural area, remember:

- Never feed wildlife.
- View wildlife with respect.
- All wildlife is wild and unpredictable. Stay a safe distance from any wild animal —15 feet is recommended.
- All plants and animals within National Park Service areas are protected, and it is illegal to collect any wildlife without special permits.

Cover photo: southern toad, NPS/JAN SHIREY

**How You Behave
Can Save
Do Not Feed or
Harass Wildlife**



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA!

Big Cypress Amphibians



Scientific Name

Narrow-mouthed Toads

Eastern narrow-mouthed toad

Gastrophryne carolinensis

Toads

Giant, marine, or cane toad*

Bufo marinus

Oak toad

Bufo quercicus

Southern toad

Bufo terrestris

Treefrogs & Chorus Frogs

Barking treefrog

Hyla gratiosa

Cuban treefrog*

Osteopilus septentrionalis

Florida cricket frog

Acris gryllus dorsalis

Green treefrog

Hyla cinerea

Greenhouse frog

Eleutherodactylus planirostris

Little grass frog

Pseudacris ocularis

Southern chorus frog

Pseudacris nigrita

Squirrel treefrog

Hyla squirella

True Frogs

Pig frog

Rana grylio

Southern leopard frog

Rana sphenocephala

Aquatic Salamanders

Everglades dwarf siren

Pseudobranchius axanthus belli

Greater siren

Siren lacertina

Two-toed amphiuma

Amphiuma means

Newts

Peninsula newt

Notophthalmus viridescens piaropicola

* = invasive species

Top to bottom: Eastern narrow-mouthed toad; Southern leopard frog, one of the larger frogs of the swamp—only the pig frog is larger; barking treefrog.

NPS/TODD PIERSON

Amphibians tend to be highly sensitive to environmental changes, for that reason scientists often use them to determine the overall health of an area.



Left: Cuban treefrog, an introduced species that has spread rapidly in Florida. These frogs disrupt the ecosystem because they eat smaller native tree frogs. The native green treefrog (right) can change to brown coloring, thereby confusing identification. However, the Cuban treefrog has extra large toe pads and much wartier skin than natives. It also has a skin fold starting from the eye towards the tympanum.

NPS/Hardin Waddle, PhD