



Southern Leopard Frog. Copyright Rusty Wilson, FrogWatch USA Volunteer.

[www.aza.org/frogwatch-newsletters](http://www.aza.org/frogwatch-newsletters)

**June 2013**

## Greetings FrogWatch USA™ Volunteers

Congratulations on entering the final third of the 2013 FrogWatch USA monitoring season! We are now hearing mid-to-late season breeders dominating evening choruses. Volunteers monitoring ephemeral wetland sites may find the habitat is drying. If your site dries before the conclusion of FrogWatch USA monitoring season at the end of August, you have completed your monitoring for 2013.

Volunteers might also notice the familiar buzz and hum of insects during the summer. Even more background noise may be heard during monitoring in the eastern United States, when the Brood II periodical cicada, also known as the “Brood II Magicicada,” emerges. Most of the noisy mate advertisement happens during the day, but may still be heard into the evening and night. Feel free to note this on the FrogWatch USA monitoring observation data sheet in the “Additional Notes” section.

To learn more about the Magicicada and to contribute data on their location and timing of behavior, check out one of these citizen science efforts:

- Cicada Tracker, Radiolab: [project.wnyc.org/cicadas/](http://project.wnyc.org/cicadas/)
- Cicadas in My Hood, Wildlife Conservation Society: [www.wcs.org/cicadas](http://www.wcs.org/cicadas)
- Magicicada Mapping Project: [www.magicicada.org](http://www.magicicada.org)

Thank you for your participation in the 2013 FrogWatch USA season. We look forward to receiving more of your valuable monitoring data.

## 2013 Data Submissions

Data sheets should be completed in their entirety, reviewed for completion and accuracy, and submitted digitally to [frogwatch@aza.org](mailto:frogwatch@aza.org) as soon as possible after each monitoring session. As a reminder, you need to write the full common name of any species heard with an associated calling intensity, or specify “No species heard”. Absence data are important! Include the start and end time for your monitoring session, which must be three minutes in duration and take place at least 30 minutes after sunset. Monitoring observations should be made no later than 1:00 am. If the monitoring session is interrupted by noise, it must be restarted, including the acclimation period, which is a minimum of two minutes; you should be sure to adjust the start and end times accordingly. Site registration forms and observation data sheets are available for download at [www.aza.org/current-frogwatch-volunteers/](http://www.aza.org/current-frogwatch-volunteers/). If unable to submit electronically, data sheets may be mailed.

Starting next season (February 2014), volunteers will be able to enter and review data online through FrogWatch FieldScope (FWFS). Even more exciting is the ability to examine sites and observations through maps, visualizations, and other data exploration tools. FWFS is made possible through a partnership with National Geographic supported by a National Science Foundation grant, and is currently being tested to ensure that it meets your needs. Stay tuned and follow FrogWatch USA on Facebook for all the latest news and updates ([www.facebook.com/FrogWatchUSA](http://www.facebook.com/FrogWatchUSA)).



Blanchard's Cricket Frog.  
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### IN THIS ISSUE

**Greetings FrogWatch USA  
Volunteers**

**2013 Data Submissions**

**Common Names: Take 2**

**Creature Feature:  
Eastern Narrow-mouthed  
Toad**

**Volunteer Notes from the  
Field**

## Common Names: Take 2

The March 2013 newsletter presented the pitfalls associated with abbreviating a species name to “chorus frog”. This concern carries forward throughout the FrogWatch USA season, where the temptation to write “cricket frog” or “leopard frog” prevails. Here is a reference table to help determine which species are in your region. Regions are consistent with those defined by the Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC) habitat classification definitions ([www.parcplace.org](http://www.parcplace.org)).

Common Name	Latin Name	Range (PARC Region)
Eastern Cricket Frog *	<i>Acris crepitans</i>	Northeast & Southeast
Blanchard's Cricket Frog *	<i>Acris blanchardi</i>	Midwest, Southwest, Southeast (Portions of KY, TN, & AR). Northeast (in a small section of WV).
Southern Cricket Frog **	<i>Acris gryllus</i>	Southeast
Northern Leopard Frog	<i>Lithobates pipiens</i>	Northwest, Midwest, Northeast, Southwest
Southern Leopard Frog	<i>Lithobates sphenoccephalus</i>	Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Southwest
Plains Leopard Frog	<i>Lithobates blairi</i>	Midwest & Southwest
Rio Grande Leopard Frog	<i>Lithobates berlandieri</i>	Southwest
Relict Leopard Frog	<i>Lithobates onca</i>	Southwest (Nevada-Arizona border)
Chiricahua Leopard Frog	<i>Lithobates chiricahuensis</i>	Southwest (Arizona & New Mexico)
Lowland Leopard Frog	<i>Lithobates yavapaiensis</i>	Southwest (Primarily Arizona)
* - Blanchard's and eastern cricket frog were recognized as distinct species in 2008 after being previously lumped as subspecies of northern cricket frog.		
** - There are two subspecies of southern cricket frog, Florida cricket frog ( <i>Acris gryllus dorsalis</i> ) and Coastal Plain cricket frog ( <i>A. g. gryllus</i> ). FrogWatch USA requires species-level identification, but volunteers may list subspecies if certain of that identification level.		

If you are monitoring in an area where ranges between two closely-related species overlap, you may write the species complex. Consult your local chapter if help is needed to determine which species you are likely to hear. You can locate a chapter, as well as access links to species distribution resources, by visiting [www.aza.org/become-a-frogwatch-volunteer/](http://www.aza.org/become-a-frogwatch-volunteer/).

### Volunteer Notes from the Field

The “Additional Notes” field on the observation monitoring data sheet is most frequently used to document changes in site conditions, or frogs and toads heard outside of the three minute observation window. But, the space can also be used for whatever a volunteer wishes to detail.

FROGZ (FrogWatch Researchers of the Greenville Zoo) volunteer Rusty, whose photo is featured as the banner of the newsletter, has been documenting the emergence and peak of lightening bug activity at FrogWatch USA monitoring sites in the Ninety Six National Historic Site in South Carolina.

Other volunteers have documented fishing spider, glow worm, predaceous diving beetle, various egg masses and tadpoles, eastern red-spotted newt, Jefferson salamander, spotted salamander, great blue heron, barred owl, eastern whip-poor-whil, woodcock, Canada goose, coyote, red fox, raccoon, beaver, southern flying squirrel, and bats flitting by overhead. From ferns to feathers to fur, and everything in between, the notes provided by some FrogWatch USA volunteers tell a great story.

### Creature Feature: Eastern Narrow-mouthed Toad



The eastern narrow-mouthed toad (*Gastrophryne carolinensis*) is one of three species of Microhylidae in the United States. Eastern narrow-mouthed toad possess a somewhat comical appearance, having a small, narrow head supported by a rather inflated midsection. In fact, the *Gastros* portion of the genus name refers to “belly”. That distinctly pointed head, accompanied with a fold of skin behind the eyes, makes the species and its close relatives well-adapted for eating termites and ants.

The eastern narrow-mouthed toad is secretive and difficult to find outside of the breeding season, remaining beneath cover such as logs and leaf litter, and burying into sandy soil during dry periods. But they sure do not sound shy during breeding season! The species is easily recognized by its explosive, nasal, and buzzy “behhhh!” or “waaaaa!” that may last several seconds.

Eastern narrow-mouthed toad are found primarily in the southeastern United States. So far this season, the species has been heard by FrogWatch USA volunteers in Florida, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Maryland. Be sure to make monitoring visits after heavy rains for the best chance to hear its sheep-like call.