

# Foothill Yellow-legged Frog

*Rana boylei*  
Family Ranidae



**Global Rank:** G3

**State Rank:** S2S3 (CA); S3 (OR)

**Distribution:** Range extends from the Coastal and Cascade Mountains in Oregon, south through the Coastal and Sierra Nevada Mountains of California to northern Los Angeles County. There are a few isolated populations in northern Baja California. Extends from near sea level to around 7,000 ft. (2,130 m.) in elevation.

**Description:** Adults reach up to 3 in. (7 cm.) in snout-vent length. Color varies from gray, brown, reddish, or olive above, sometimes plain-colored but more often spotted and mottled with dusky. Colors often blend with background. Yellow extends from the underside of the hind legs to the lower abdomen. The snout has a triangular, usually buff colored patch from the tip to a line connecting the eyelids, but without a mask. Throat and chest are often dark spotted. Young with faint or absent yellow coloration on hind legs. Adult males have swollen and darkened thumb bases.



*Current range of the  
foothill yellow-legged frog*

**Reproduction:** The species breeds after high water subsides, usually from late April to early June. Females lay clutches of about 1,000 eggs, which hatch in about five days. Tadpoles metamorphose in three or four months.

**Food:** Adult frogs eat a variety of both aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates, including grasshoppers, hornets, ants, flies, beetles, and mosquitoes.

**Habits:** A stream or river frog of woodland, chaparral, and forest usually found near water, especially near riffles where there are rocks, stream-side vegetation, and sloping banks for sunning. Some streams in its range may dry to a series of potholes connected by trickles in the summer. Individuals have been found up to 50 meters from permanent water on moist outcrops. If startled when along streambanks they jump into the water and hide under rocks and vegetation. Garter snakes are a major predator of this species.

**Management Implications:** This frog was once considered common, but some populations have declined greatly. Present status and reasons for population declines are unknown. Reductions in flows from foothill streams may be a factor.

**Important References:** Stebbins, R.C. 1985. A field guide to western reptiles and amphibians. The Peterson Field Guide Series, Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, NY; Csuti, B., A.J. Kimerling, T.A. O'Neil, M.M. Shaughnessy, E.P. Gaines, and M.M.P. Huso. 1997. Atlas of Oregon wildlife. Oregon State University Press, Corvallis, OR.