POCKET GUIDE TO THE AMPHIBIANS of WYOMING

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A Special Acknowledgement to Adam LaDell
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KEY TOAD FEATURES

Cranial Crest
Warts
Dorsal Stripe

Throat is often dark on breeding males

Nuptial Pads (dark calluses on thumb and first finger of breeding males)

KEY FROG FEATURES

Dorsolateral Folds
Groin

Tympanum (ear drum)

Thumb is swollen on breeding males
**Tiger Salamander**

*Ambystoma mavortium*

**Identification (terrestrial adult)**
- Only salamander in Wyoming
- Dorsal color: black or dark green with variable mottling of yellow or olive blotches, stripes, or spots
- Smooth skin, long tail
- Total length: ~5.5 to ~8 inches

**Paedomorph (aquatic adult)**
- Alternate adult stage resembles very large larvae (gills present)
- Dark green or olive, often with small black spots or blotches
- Total length: ~8 to 12 inches

**Eggs & Larvae**
- Eggs attached to submerged vegetation singly or in long cluster of 2-120 eggs.
- Larvae are olive green with small black blotches, wide heads, and **long, feathery gills**

**Breeding Habitat**
- Permanent or temporary, natural or man-made ponds, pools, stock tanks, and backwater or slow moving areas in creeks

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**Plains Spadefoot**  
*Spea bombifrons*

**Identification**
- Dorsal color: light gray or brown with dark mottling, often with small orange warts
- Relatively smooth skin
- Ventral color: white
- Size: ~1/2 inch (metamorph) to ~2.5 inches (adult)

**Vertical Pupils**
- Bony lump (boss) between the eyes

**Eggs & Tadpoles**
- Eggs in small mass attached to submerged vegetation
- Tadpoles often pale brown to greenish
- Tadpole eyes medial, anal vent on midline

**Breeding Habitat**
- After heavy rains in temporary puddles, ditches, pools, and ponds in prairies, sagebrush steppe, sandhill, and desert scrub

[Images of eggs, tadpoles, metamorphs, and adults]
**Great Basin Spadefoot**

*Spea intermontana*

**Identification**
- Dorsal color: light gray, brown, or olive with small dark spots and small warts (often orange) present
- Relatively smooth skin
- Ventral color: cream or white
- Size: ~1/2 inch (metamorph) to ~2 inches (adult)
- **Vertical pupils**
- Glandular lump (boss) between the eyes

**Eggs & Tadpoles**
- Eggs in small mass attached to submerged vegetation
- Tadpole eyes are medial, anal vent on midline
- Tadpoles often pale brown to greenish in color

**Breeding Habitat**
- After heavy rains in temporary puddles, ditches, pools and ponds in prairies, sagebrush steppe, sandhill, and desert scrub

[Images of Great Basin Spadefoot: eggs, tadpole, adult]
Wyoming Toad  
*Anaxyrus baxteri*

**Identification**
- Endangered species, unlikely to be observed outside the Laramie plains
- Dorsal color: tan to dark brown with dark blotches surrounding warts
- Pale dorsal stripe
- Ventral color: cream or white with black spots
- Size: ~1/2 inch (metamorph) to ~2.5 inches (adult)
- **Cranial crests form parallel ridges;** may be fused to look like one wide ridge with a groove in the middle

**Eggs & Tadpoles**
- Eggs in long strings
- Uniformly dark black tadpoles with anal vent on midline
- Tadpole eyes are medial

**Breeding Habitat**
- Shallow water in temporary or permanent ponds, wetlands, oxbows, and flood-plains in the Laramie basin

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Western (Boreal) Toad
Anaxyrus boreas

Identification
- Dorsal color: light olive to dark brown with dark, raised warts
- White dorsal stripe
- Ventral color: white with black spots
- Size: ~3/4 inch (metamorph) to ~4.5 inches (adult)
- No cranial crest

Eggs & Tadpoles
- Egg strings with lots of jelly; usually wrapped around vegetation
- Tadpole eyes are medial
- Uniformly dark black tadpoles with anal vent on midline

Breeding Habitat
- Shallow water in ponds, flooded meadows, and slow moving or pooled water on the edge of streams

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Great Plains Toad
*Anaxyrus cognatus*

**Identification**
- Dorsal color: tan to brown or olive with oftentimes symmetrical large greenish-black blotches surrounded by pale rings
- Dorsum covered with small warts
- Ventral color: cream or white with no spots
- Size: ~3/4 inch (metamorph) to ~5 inches (adult)
- **V-shaped cranial crests** that join to form a lump (boss) above the snout (may be absent or weak in juveniles)

**Eggs & Tadpoles**
- Eggs in strings; outer jelly of string is scalloped, making eggs look like beads on a string (see back)
- Uniformly dark black tadpoles with anal vent on midline
- Tadpole eyes are medial

**Breeding Habitat**
- Lower elevation temporary pools, ponds, and potholes, but occasionally permanent ponds and backwater or pooled areas of streams

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**Rocky Mountain (Woodhouse's) Toad**
*Anaxyrus woodhousii woodhousii*

**Identification**
- Dorsal color: mottled tan or gray to dark brown or olive with irregular dark spots and many warts
- White dorsal stripe
- Ventral color: cream, occasionally with black spots
- Size: ~3/4 inch (metamorph) to ~4.5 inches (adult)
- **L-shaped cranial crests** (may be absent or weak in juveniles)

**Eggs & Tadpoles**
- Eggs in strings up to 10 feet long
- Dark tadpoles with gold flecking
- Tadpole eyes medial; anal vent on midline

**Breeding Habitat**
- Lower elevation ponds, reservoirs, lakes and backwater areas of streams and rivers

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**Boreal Chorus Frog**  
*Pseudacris maculata*

### Identification
- Smallest frog in Wyoming
- Size: 1/2 inch (metamorph) to ~1.5 inches
- Dorsal color: tan, green, or rust red
- Dorsal pattern highly variable, typically 3 sets of stripes down the back, but stripes often broken into spots
- Dark mask typically extends from nose to groin as a stripe
- **No dorsolateral folds**
- Often heard rather than seen. Call sounds like running a thumb nail along a comb (criiiiiiiiiik)

### Eggs & Tadpoles
- Small egg clusters (less than 1 inch) wrapped around vegetation
- Only tadpole in WY with *lateral eyes* (eyes stick out to sides and form part of the body’s profile)
- Anal vent is on the side

### Breeding Habitat
- Shallow water with emergent vegetation (ranging from wet meadows to reservoirs)

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**American Bullfrog**
*Lithobates catesbeianus*

**Identification**
- Largest frog in Wyoming (may be introduced)
- Size: ~2 inches (metamorph) to ~6 inches (adult)
- Dorsal color: light green to dark olive or brown
- Dark spots or dark mottling
- Ventral color: cream to yellow with dark mottling
- **Dorsolateral folds end behind the tympanum** (not continued down back)

**Eggs & Tadpoles**
- Eggs in large floating sheet on surface (1 to 5 feet wide)
- Tadpoles can reach up to 5.5 inches
- Tadpole eyes are medial; anal vent is on the side

**Breeding Habitat**
- Shallow portions of permanent water bodies with lots of vegetation; prefer warm water

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**Northern Leopard Frog**
*Lithobates pipiens*

**Identification**
- Dorsal color: bright green, olive, or brown
- **Large, dark oval spots with pale edging**
- Skin is relatively smooth
- Ventral color: creamy white with no red present (on healthy frogs)
- **Prominent pale dorsolateral folds** from the eye down the length of the body
- Obvious typanum (ear)
- Size: 1 inch (metamorph) to ~4.5 inches (adult)

**Eggs & Tadpoles**
- Eggs in round cluster ~3 to 5 inches in diameter
- Eggs either on the bottom or attached to vegetation
- Tadpole eyes are medial and anal vent is on the side

**Breeding Habitat**
- Shallow water in marshes and semi-permanent or permanent ponds (beaver ponds, stock ponds, etc.), or slow moving backwater areas along rivers or streams
Wood Frog
Lithobates sylvaticus

Identification
- Dorsal color: brown; Wood Frogs in southern WY have prominent white dorsal stripe
- Dorsolateral folds go from the eye to the groin
- Dark face mask (Zorro frog!) that extends just past the tympanum
- Size: ~3/4 inch (metamorph) to ~3.5 inches (adult)

Eggs & Tadpoles
- Eggs in round cluster ~3 to 5 inches in diameter
- Eggs often in communal clusters just below the surface of the water
- Tail fin starts high on the body and is strongly arched
- Tadpole eyes are medial and anal vent is on the side

Breeding Habitat
- Shallow water in small permanent to ephemeral forest ponds and potholes or flooded meadows

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**Columbia Spotted Frog**
*Rana luteiventris*

**Identification**
- Size: 3/4 inch (metamorph) to ~3.9 inches
- Dorsal color: tan to dark olive or brown
- Irregular dark spots, often with light centers
- Dorsal skin has warty texture
- Dorsolateral folds present
- Red to orange lower abdomen and legs

**Eggs & Tadpoles**
- Eggs in round cluster (~3 to 8 inches)
- Egg masses are free floating and often in large communal clusters
- Tadpole eyes are medial, anal vent is on the side

**Breeding Habitat**
- Shallow stagnant or slow-moving water ranging from temporary ponds and marshes to lakes and backwater areas of streams

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