



African clawed frog

(*Xenopus laevis*)

Originated in South Africa. Introduced in France in the 1950s for biological research. Unintentional introduction (escape from a breeding centre) in the Deux-Sèvres department in the 1980s.

Description

- The eyes are located on the upper part of the head
- Colours vary depending on the environment, from yellowish to brown with spots
- Sexual dimorphism in adults with females 11 to 14 centimetres in size and males 6 cm
- The rear feet are palmed with three dark claws
- The front feet are short and characteristic in shape
- The frogs have whitish "ribs" along the side
- Tadpoles have two barbels and move in groups with their head facing downward
- The frogs are thought to live for over 15 years

Ecology and reproduction

- Habitats span a wide range, including human-impacted and highly modified environments, notably stagnant aquatic environments (pools, ponds and lakes), rivers, canals, etc.
- The highest population densities are found in eutrophic waters
- The animals can migrate in large numbers if reproduction ponds begin to dry up and the weather is fairly wet
- The diet consists essentially of invertebrates, but direct predation of fish and amphibians is also possible
- The reproductive potential is high with 2 to 3 spawns per year (several thousand eggs each) and with females arriving at sexual maturity at the age of 6 to 8 months

Documentation

- Sarat E. (coord.) 2012. Vertébrés exotiques envahissants du bassin de la Loire (hors poissons) : connaissances et expériences de gestion. ONCFS, Plan Loire Grandeur Nature, 128 pp.
- Manche C. 2007. Les espèces exotiques envahissantes susceptibles de proliférer dans les milieux aquatiques et les zones humides sur le territoire du SAGE Authion - Guide technique - Fiches descriptives par espèces. Univ. François Rabelais, CLE du SAGE Authion. 74 pp.
- Tinsley R., Minter L., Measey J., Howell K., Veloso A., Núñez H. et Romano A. 2009. *Xenopus laevis*. In: IUCN 2013. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2013.1. www.iucnredlist.org.

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Classification	
Order	Anura
Family	Pipidae
Genus	<i>Xenopus</i>
Species	<i>Xenopus laevis</i> (Daudin, 1802)



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1. Rear foot.
2. Front foot.
3. The "ribs" along the side.
4. Different stages of tadpole development.

