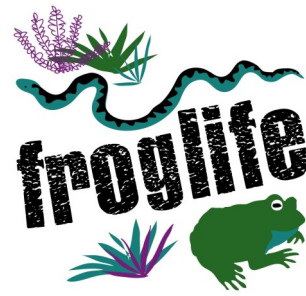


POOL FROG

(*Pelophylax lessonae*)



Identification:

- Adult females up to 9 cm in length. Males significantly smaller.
- Brown or green with dark blotches across the back and a cream or yellow dorsal stripe.
- Pair of ridges run from the eyes down the back.
- Vocal sacs visible either side of the mouth of breeding males.
- Oval, horizontal pupil.

Call:

- A loud call, often likened to ducks quacking or rapid laughter 're...re...re'.



Distribution:

- Native to the UK.
- Very rare in the UK.
- Previously thought to be extinct in the UK but recently reintroduced to a site in East Anglia.
- Genetic analysis and studies of male calls revealed that English Pool Frogs belonged to a distinct, and very rare, northern group of Pool Frogs, also found in Sweden and Norway.



Ecology:

- Found in damp densely vegetated areas.
- Prefer slow flowing waterways such as calm rivers, ponds or marshes.
- Hibernates on land during the winter.
- Feed on a range of invertebrates including spiders, insects, moths and flies.



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Lifecycle:

- Adult frogs emerge from hibernation in late spring and head to water to breed.
- The breeding season runs from May/June.
- Females release clumps of spawn in early summer.
- Froglets emerge from the water in late summer.
- Adults and froglets spend the autumn feeding to build up fat reserves in preparation for winter.
- Winter is spent hibernating on land beneath rocks, logs or in crevices.
- Pool Frogs reach sexual maturity at 2 years old.



Eggs:

- Small spawn 'rafts'. Individual eggs are brown on top and yellowish underneath.



Predators and other threats:

- Threatened by drainage of fenlands.
- Predators include Grass Snakes, owls and some wading birds.

N.B. Pool Frogs have full legal protection under UK law making it an offence to kill, injure, capture, disturb or sell them, or to damage or destroy their habitats. This applies to all life-stages.



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