

## **2013 Lake of Bays Association FrogWatch Report**

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All the data collected by the volunteer LOBA FrogWatch citizen scientists were entered into the Nature Watch Canada website, which is an ecological monitoring program that gathers the information that provincially and nationally based scientists use to monitor the environment.

The information entered by the Lake of Bays Association volunteer citizen scientists into the FrogWatch division of Nature Watch Canada website was collected from that source for the Lake of Bays Association data collection.

Kudos need to go out to all the twelve (12) wonderful volunteer LOBA FrogWatch citizen scientists who participated in the 2013 LOBA FrogWatch Program. Collectively they made an impressive one hundred seventy-eight (178) observations from March through June.

These wonderful people chose a wetland area near their home/cottage. After learning the calls of the area frogs they spent a few minutes, whenever they were free to do so, to listen and watch for frogs. They then reported their observations on-line. The information collected is invaluable to the National and Ontario FrogWatch Programs as well as to the LOBA FrogWatch Program.

All observations were reported using the National FrogWatch Program's abundance codes:

- No frogs or toads seen or heard
- Frog(s) or toad(s) seen but not heard
- Individuals could be counted, calls not overlapping
- Some individuals could be counted, other calls overlapping
- Full Chorus, calls continuous overlapping

There are a total of thirteen (13) frogs and toads that make their home in Ontario. Ten (10) of them are found in Muskoka.

Below is a Table indicating the frogs reported, the date when they were first heard, first seen, and last heard.

<b><u>COMMON NAME</u></b>	<b><u>1<sup>ST</sup> HEARD</u></b>	<b><u>1<sup>ST</sup> SEEN</u></b>	<b><u>LAST HEARD</u></b>
American Toad	May 0/13	May 11/13	July 4/13
Bullfrog	June 12/13	X	June 21/13
Gray Treefrog	April 30/13	X	June 23/13
Green Frog	May 26/13	X	July 4/13
Leopard Frog	May 6/13	X	June 12/13
Mink Frog	X	X	X
Pickerel Frog	X		X
Spring Peeper	April 18/13	X	June 22/13
Western/Striped Chorus Frog	May 9/13	X	June 4/13
Wood Frog	April 22/13	X	May 30/13

The first frog call reported in 2013 was a Spring Peeper heard on April 18, 2013 (thirty-one days later than last year's first frog was heard!). This report was made by Kelly Stronks at her Gosling Lake Pond site in the Dwight area.

The last frog call reported was a Green Frog heard on July 4th, 2013. This report was made by Margot Cook at her Boyne Creek @ Dwight Beach Road site in Dwight.

American toads were the only frogs that were reported as being seen. They do tend to be the ones that are most easy to see as they are often found in gardens around our homes and cottages.

In 2013 no one reported seeing or hearing a mink frog or a pickerel frog. In 2011 there had been only one Mink Frog and no pickerel frogs reported. In 2012 only one (1) pickerel frog was reported.

Why is that? Have species these disappeared in the Lake of Bays area? Is there a problem that should concern us?

There are no provincial or national reports of a problem with these species. There simply may not be many of these species in the Lake of Bays area.

It is also possible that no one was around when these frogs were calling in 2013.

This could also be an indication that our volunteer citizen scientist FrogWatch observers (myself included) are getting better at recognizing frog calls.

Perhaps that lone Mink Frog heard in 2011 and that single pickerel frog reported in 2012 were incorrectly identified. When heard in 2013, they were correctly identified as another species. Leopard Frogs and Pickerel Frogs have a very similar call and the two could be easily confused. Perhaps that lone Pickerel Frog heard in 2012 was actually a Leopard Frog that was correctly identified in 2013.

Again, this could be an indication that our volunteer LOBA FrogWatch citizen scientists are getting better at correctly identifying frog calls.

We will continue to monitor this situation this year and in the future. Perhaps we will have some answers over time.

The official Ontario FrogWatch programs and subsequently, the LOBA FrogWatch programs, run from March through June when frogs call most frequently and in larger numbers. However, many frogs can also be seen or heard later in the year, some as late as September or October.

Although our volunteer LOBA FrogWatch citizen scientists are asked to listen for frogs and toads from March through June of each year they are encouraged to keep their ears and eyes open beyond that time period. Perhaps in future years there will be reports of frog and toad calls and sightings throughout the summer months and into the fall.

Further details of all the LOBA FrogWatch reports including the names and locations of the registered wetland sites, maps, reported observations, indicated species, abundance codes, dates, and other notes are available upon request. Please let me know if you have any questions and I will do my best to answer them.

*Caroline Konarzewski*