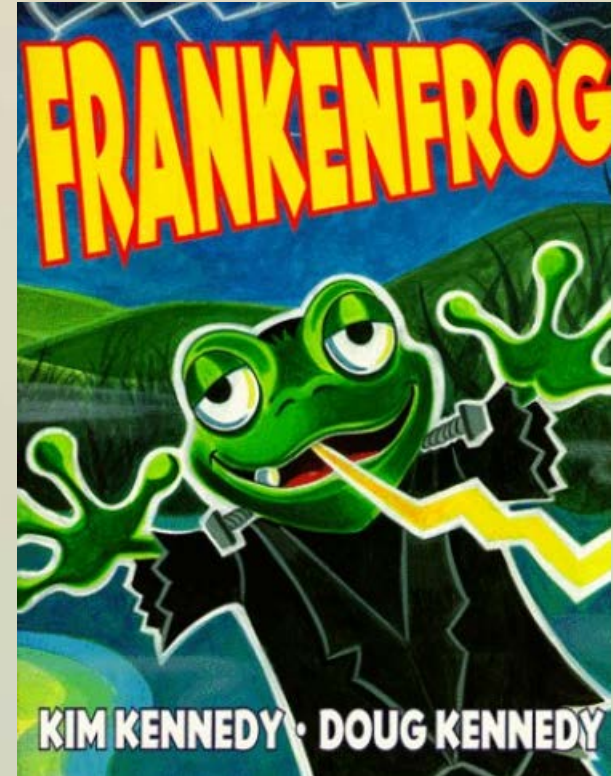


African Clawed Frog Removal Effort



Kristen Penney Sommers
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission



What is an African Clawed Frog?

- Nonnative aquatic freshwater frogs from sub-Saharan Africa
- Adults grow to ~5 inches
- Easily identified by webbing on hind limb toes
- On hind limbs, the innermost three toes have a sharp black claw



www.a2zpetsinfo.com



Newportbay.org



So....what is the history?

- 1964- Miami - Dade
- 1996- Hillsborough county
- 2010- Brevard County
- 2013 – Hillsborough County
- 2014- Hillsborough County
- 2014- Miami-Dade
- 2016 Hillsborough County



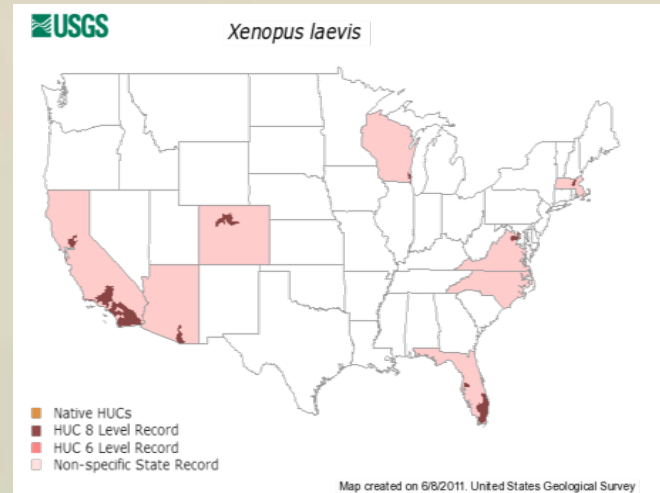
How did they get here?

- First observed 1964 when animal importer released 200+ unwanted specimens into a canal in Hialeah
- Other sources of introduction remain unknown
 - Released/escaped pets?
 - Released/escaped from laboratories?



Why are we concerned?

- Possess characteristics of successful invaders
 - Easily adapt to many habitats and conditions including disturbed areas
 - Very fecund – females can lay up to 8,000 eggs per year
 - Invasive in other areas
- Can adversely impact native wildlife
 - Effective carriers of Bd – chytrid fungus
 - Voracious predators



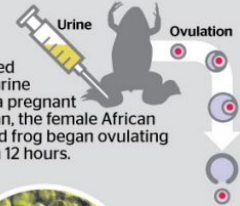
Wildfacts.com

How chytrid fungus arrived in Australia

African clawed frogs were the first well-documented way to test if a woman was pregnant. They were imported for use in Australian pregnancy tests, known as the Hogben Test, in the 1940s and 1950s.



When injected with urine from a pregnant woman, the female African clawed frog began ovulating within 12 hours.



However, the African clawed frog carried the chytrid fungus. It is believed the fungus entered the ecosystem either through coming in contact with other amphibian species in laboratories or when the African clawed frog was disposed of after testing.



2016- Hillsborough County

- Two adults removed by homeowner in Riverview, FL
- Thousands of tadpoles in a single pond in Kingswood Mobile Home Park
- Retention pond connected to Rice Creek via outflow pipe



2016 Timeline

- 6/23 Collection by landowner
- Landowner (Ms. Swilley) reports to USGS
- USGS Informs FWC, UF and other partners
- Early July UF staff surveyed 17 water bodies, found tadpoles and froglets in 1 pond, findings reported on 7/27
- Between discovery and renovation of pond, UF removed approximately 13,000 tadpoles and froglets
- FWC with partners developed a response plan



Week of August 16th

- Localized removal effort in Kingswood Mobile Home Park
 - Constructing drift fence
 - Hydrated lime renovation
 - Assessment of surrounding water bodies
- Tested ACFs and native amphibians for chytrid fungus



Blogs.discovermagazine.com



Renovation outcomes

- 50 lbs of hydrated lime added around the barrier
- 150 lbs spread in the lake
- Frogs and froglets trying to escape euthanized in 20,000 ppm solution of MS222



Informing the public

- Canvassed mobile home park with public information sheet
- Prepared talking points in case of media interest

Have you seen

African clawed frogs?



Brian Grabelnik

African clawed frogs are nonnative aquatic frogs that have been introduced into Florida. This invasive species can negatively impact native wildlife through competition, predation and disease transmission.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is currently taking steps in your area to prevent African clawed frogs from becoming established in the wild. Ponds that are undergoing removal efforts are surrounded by silt fencing. Please do not disturb these ponds or silt fences and keep children and pets away from study areas.

Remember- It is illegal to introduce nonnative species in Florida.

Identification

- Flattened body with small head
- Can grow to 5 inches in length
- Mottled, greenish-gray to brown skin that is smooth and slippery
- Forelimbs with four unwebbed fingers
- Hindlimbs with five webbed toes
- Black claw-like tips on three innermost back toes
- Crawl across land and do not hop

African clawed frogs can be found in freshwater ponds and streams. They eat a wide variety of invertebrates, fish and other frogs, and reproduce rapidly. They can crawl (but do not hop!) to other ponds, tolerate a wide variety of water conditions, and survive drought and cold temperatures.

You can help! Report African clawed frogs to the FWC

- Take a photo
- Note the location
- Report your sighting
 - Online at IveGot1.org
 - By phone at **888-Ive-Got1 (888-483-4681)**
 - Download the **IveGot1** reporting app

Please do not report these native frogs and toads:



Southern toad: knobs and crests on head



Pig frog: visible ear drum



Narrowmouth toad: fold of skin across head behind eyes



Spadefoot toad: large black spade on each hind foot



Follow up

- August 23- No additional found
- August 31- Landowner caught 8 juvenile ACF
- September 20- UF staff returned to find lots of frogs in same pond
- November planned follow up



Take home-

- Partnership between agencies and researchers crucial to conduct EDRR
- Follow up will need to be continual until we eradication or control goals met



Thank you!



News.nationalgeographic.com

