听力原文

Today I'd like to look at another type of **amphibian** (两栖动物) – the **African clawed frog** (非洲爪蟾), whose Latin name is Xenopus laevis. Its name is derived from the three short **claws** (爪子) on each **hind foot** (后足), which it uses to **tear apart** (撕成碎片) its food. The Latin word Xenopus means 'strange foot' and laevis means 'smooth'.

I'll start with a general description. The African clawed frog is a species of frog that can be commonly found in the eastern and southern parts of Africa. They have a **flattened** (扁平的) head and body but no tongue or external ears. As the Latin name suggests, African clawed frogs have smooth skin, unlike the **toad** (蟾蜍), whose skin always has a **rough texture** (粗糙的手感). The body of African clawed frogs is covered with **mucus** (黏液), which can give their sensitive skin protection, thus playing an indispensable role in their survival. *Q31* *Q32*

Male and female African clawed frogs can be easily **distinguished** (区分) through several characteristics, and the major one is their size. Generally, male frogs are about half as big as females. Specifically, female frogs are usually 4.5 inches long, weighing around 7 **ounces** (盎司), while males are generally 2.5 inches long and 2 ounces heavy. *Q33*

Then let's turn to their habitats. African clawed frogs are entirely **aquatic** (水栖的) frogs, so they live in water all their life, whether they are **tadpoles** (蝌蚪) or adult frogs. Although they can live in a wide range of **freshwater** (淡水的) environments, they particularly like still water instead of fast-flowing streams. *Q34* During the summer, African clawed frogs are mainly found in warm rivers, and during the rainy season, they tend to move into flooded forests.

In the wild, African clawed frogs are highly **adaptable** (适应性强的) to changes in the environment around them, whether in **oases** (沙漠中的绿洲) or **glacier-covered** (冰川覆盖的) lakes. Besides, they can even survive in water with high salt levels. It is because African clawed frogs have a unique *Q35* **physiological mechanism** (生理机制) in their body that could **automatically** (自动地) regulate the balance of water inside and outside their body. In dry

weather, African clawed frogs always **burrow** (挖洞) themselves into mud, where they can survive for more than a year. They are incredibly **hardy** (坚强的) and long-lived, with an average lifespan of five to fifteen years. Some are even recorded to have lived for twenty to twenty-five years. However, African clawed frogs are **susceptible** (易受影响的) to the pollution of the water even though they are not listed as endangered species. *Q36*

Now, let's talk about the diet of African clawed frogs. They are **carnivores** (食肉动物) that like hunting insects, spiders, worms, fish etc. African clawed frogs depend on the sense of smell to **detect** (发现) their **prey** (猎物). They first use the claws on their hind feet to tear pieces of ample food, then the front feet, which are not **webbed** (趾间有蹼的), play an important role in feeding. African clawed frogs use their front feet to push food into their mouths, and meanwhile, a distinctive **pump system** (泵系统) is used to draw or suck food in their mouths. *Q37* *Q38*

So we can see African clawed frogs are **voracious** (贪吃的) **predators** (捕食者) and can quickly adapt to many habitats. Therefore, in some parts of the world, African clawed frogs act like **invasive** (入侵的) species which will negatively affect other species in the freshwater ecosystems. The evidence shows that they have devastated the populations of native frogs and other creatures by eating their young. As a result, African clawed frogs are illegal to own, transport, or sell without any permit in some states of America like California, Washington, Arizona (亚利桑那州) etc., where African clawed frogs have been seen as a type of pest. However, it's legal to own African clawed frogs in Canada. *Q39*

But not many people know that African clawed frogs are also used in medicine. As we mentioned before, the skin of African clawed frogs is covered with mucus, which has properties of **antibiotic** (抗生素). This chemical can help kill bacteria and cure the infection and is widely used by both the medical profession and the general public. So we shouldn't ignore the medical value of African clawed frogs. *Q40*