

Animal
Diaries
Life Cycles

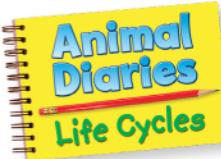


A Frog's Life



by Ellen Lawrence

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A Frog's Life

by
Ellen Lawrence

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Name: Jay

Date: April 15

Noises in the Night

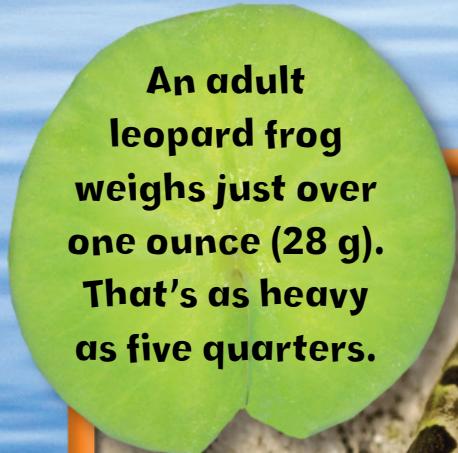
Tonight I heard loud noises coming from the pond near my house.

It sounded like snoring!

My dad said it was male leopard frogs calling female frogs to the pond.

It's spring, so it's time for the frogs to mate and lay eggs.





An adult leopard frog weighs just over one ounce (28 g). That's as heavy as five quarters.



leopard frog



Describe what a leopard frog looks like.

Date: April 16

Looking for Eggs

This morning I went to the pond before school.

Wow! The female frogs had laid their eggs during the night.

Floating in the water were big blobs that looked like clear jelly.

Inside each blob of jelly were hundreds of black dots.

Each tiny black dot was a frog egg!

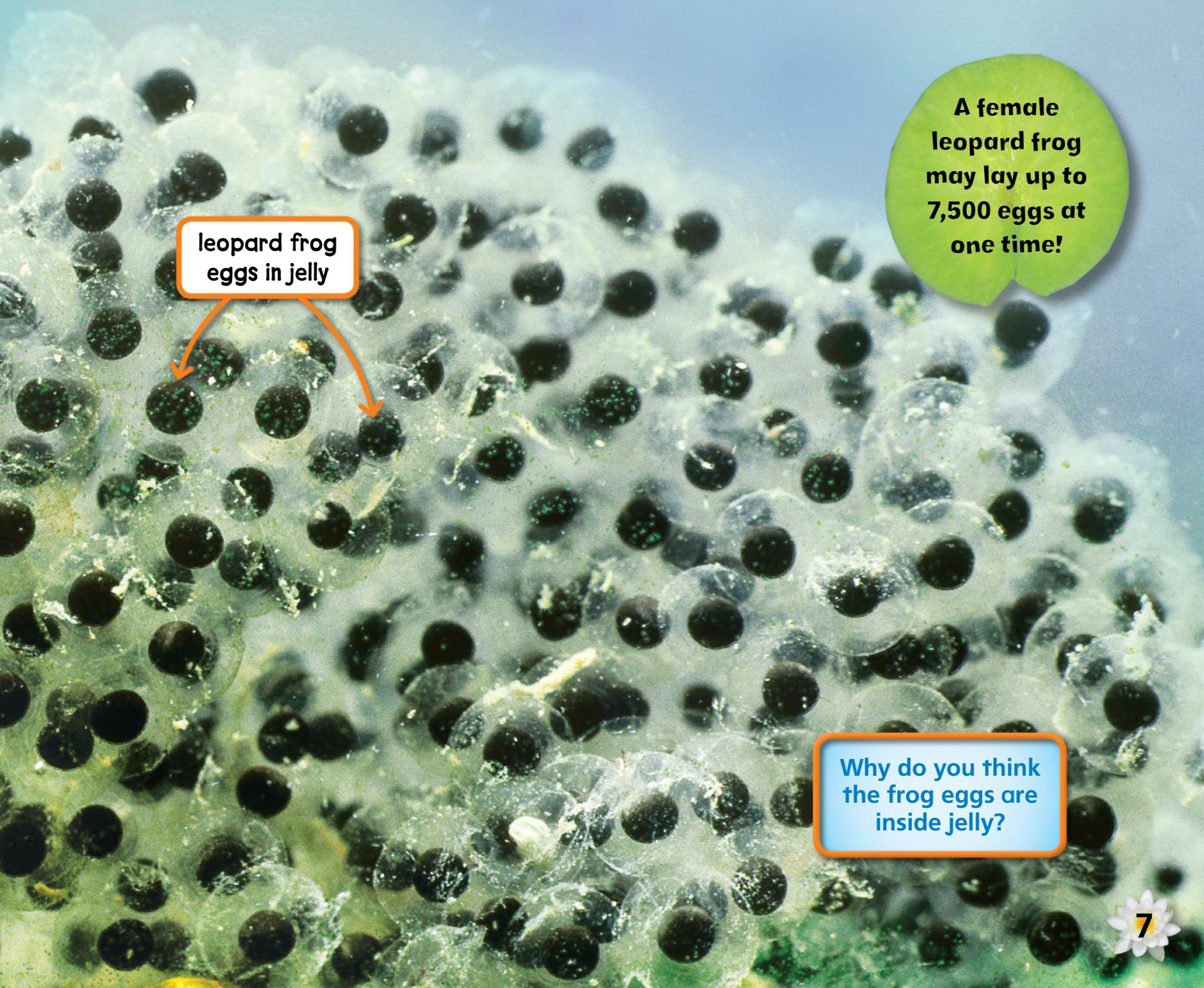
In real life, the eggs are the size of these dots.



a close-up photo of a leopard frog egg



jelly



A female leopard frog may lay up to 7,500 eggs at one time!

leopard frog eggs in jelly



Why do you think the frog eggs are inside jelly?

Date: April 30

Eggs in Danger!

The eggs have been in the pond for two weeks.

It's been a dangerous time!

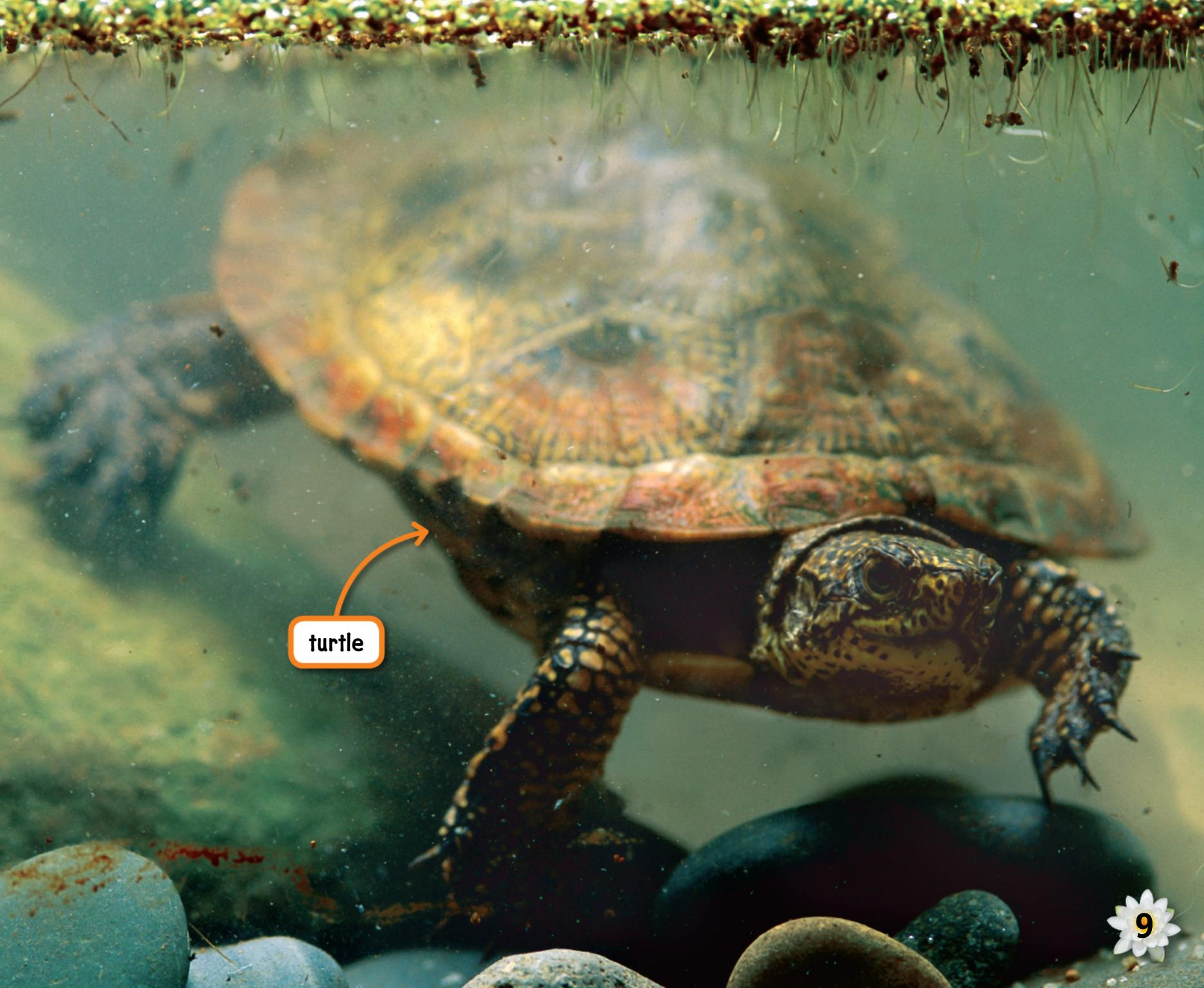
Fish, turtles, newts, leeches, and insects all eat frog eggs.

Luckily, the jelly around the eggs helps to protect them.

It makes it harder for some **predators** to quickly swallow the tiny eggs.



The jelly also protects the delicate eggs from being squashed.



turtle

Date: May 4

Tadpoles

The frogs laid their eggs 18 days ago.

Today, baby frogs called tadpoles hatched from the eggs!

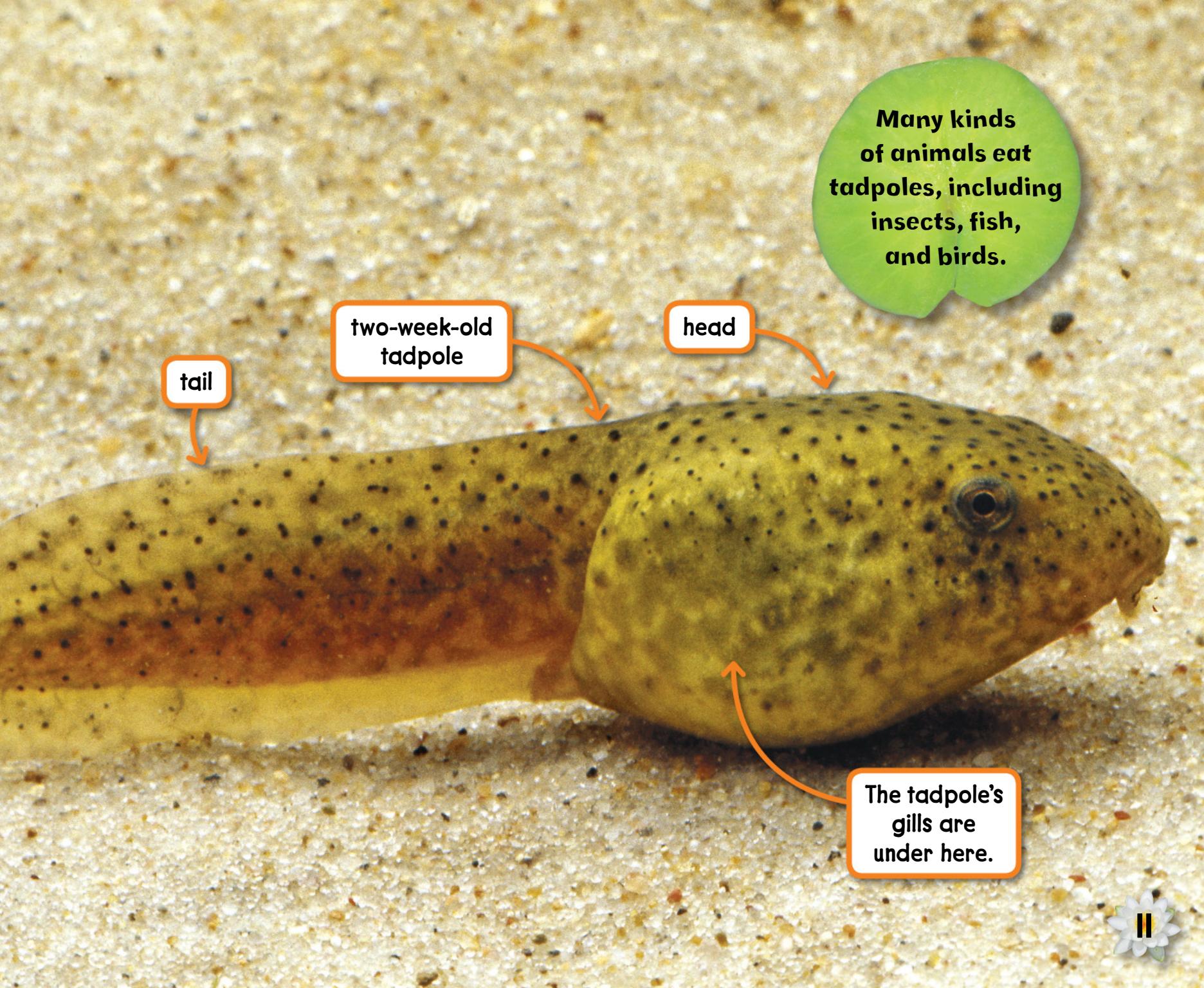
The tadpoles have big heads and long tails.

They look more like fish than frogs!

The tadpoles have body parts called **gills** that help them breathe underwater.

In what ways is a leopard frog tadpole different from an adult frog?





Many kinds
of animals eat
tadpoles, including
insects, fish,
and birds.

tail

two-week-old
tadpole

head

The tadpole's
gills are
under here.



Date: July 6

Amazing Changes

I've watched the tadpoles swimming in the pond every day.

Their bodies keep changing.

At first they grew bigger and longer.

Then, at five weeks old, they began to grow back legs.

A week later, front legs started to appear.

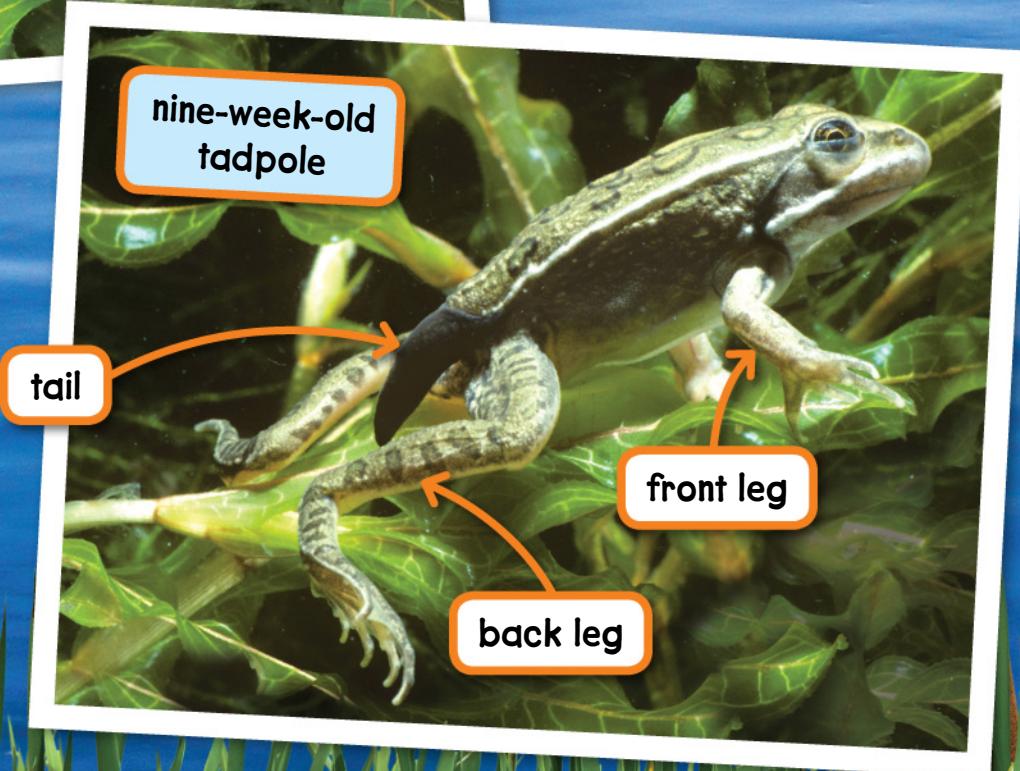
Now the tadpoles are nine weeks old.

They look like tiny frogs with tails!





Leopard frog tadpoles may only be about half an inch (1.3 cm) long when they hatch. They can grow to three inches (7.6 cm) long.



Date: July 27

Meet a Froglet

The tadpoles hatched 12 weeks ago.

Their tails kept getting shorter and shorter—and now they are gone!

The tadpoles have become tiny, young frogs called **froglets**.

They have grown body parts called lungs, for breathing air.

Their lungs have taken the place of their gills.

Now the froglets can leave the water and live on land.

Tadpoles eat mainly water plants. When they become froglets, they eat tiny animals such as insects.



froglet

This froglet and adult frog are life-size. Use a ruler to measure and compare the lengths of their bodies.



adult frog

Date: October 15

A Lucky Escape

It's fall and the frogs are now fully grown.

They have to be careful, however.

Fish, birds, snakes, foxes, and raccoons often eat frogs.

This evening, I saw a raccoon trying to catch a frog that was sitting on a rock.

The frog escaped by leaping into the pond.

It jumped about six feet (1.8 m)!



A leopard frog can hide from predators among plants. Its skin color and spots make it hard to see.



Try to find the leopard frogs in these pictures.

Date: October 20

Frog Food

Frogs hunt on land for other animals to eat.

Today, I saw a frog catch a dragonfly.

The frog shot its long, sticky tongue out of its mouth.

The dragonfly stuck to the tongue.

Then the frog ate it.

It all happened in less than a second!





a frog eating
a dragonfly

Leopard frogs
eat insects, spiders,
snails, slugs, and
worms. They may also
eat small birds and
other frogs.

Date: December 15

Waiting for Spring

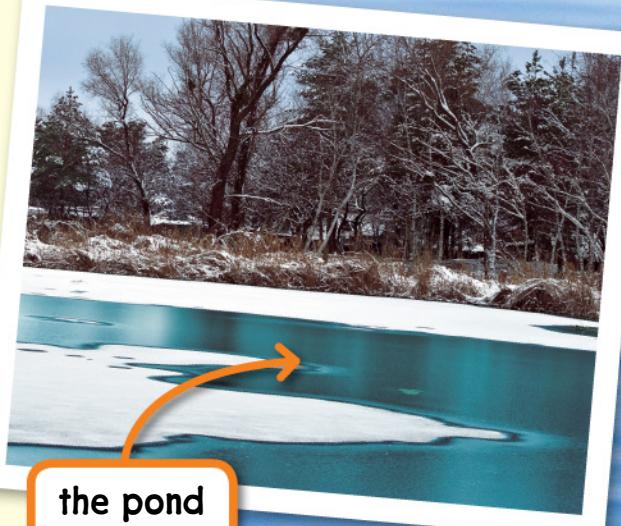
It's winter, and the frogs are lying on the mud at the bottom of the pond.

It is warmer there than at the top of the pond.

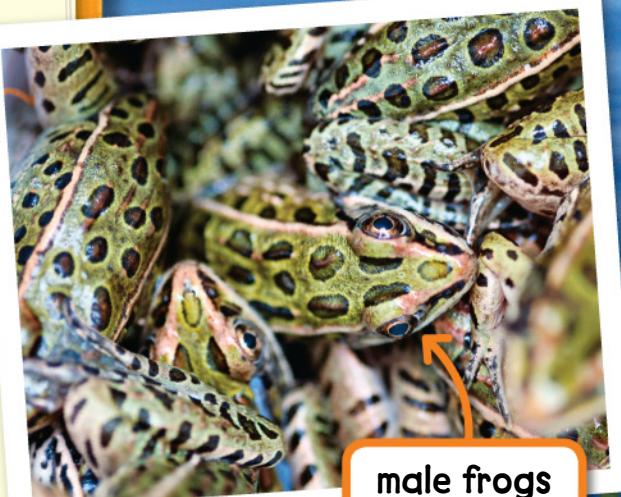
The frogs will stay in the pond until the weather warms up in spring.

In April, it will be time for the frogs to mate.

The male frogs that hatched this year will be in the pond, calling for females.



the pond
in winter



male frogs
in the pond

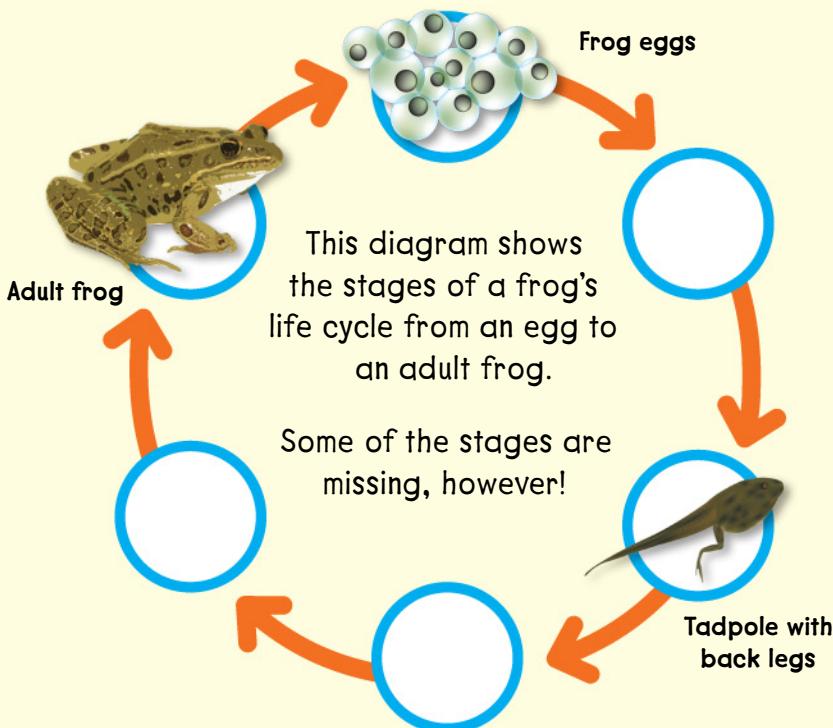


leopard frogs
meeting to mate

A leopard
frog can live
for up to
eight years.

Science Lab

A Frog's Life Cycle



Draw your own diagram of the life cycle in a notebook. Add the missing pictures below in the correct places.



Tadpole with back and front legs



Froglet



Tadpole

(The answer to this activity is on page 24.)

Fact File

Amphibians

Frogs belong to a group of animals called amphibians.

Salamanders, newts, and toads are also amphibians.

Most amphibians begin their lives in water.

As adults, they usually spend a lot of their time on land.



adult salamander



Science Words



frogllets (FROG-lits) small frogs that have recently developed from tadpoles



The tadpole's gills are under here.

gills (GILZ) body parts that tadpoles and other underwater animals, such as fish, use for breathing



mate (MAYT) to come together in order to have young



predators (PRED-uh-turz) animals that hunt and eat other animals

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Read More

Carney, Elizabeth. *Frogs!* (*National Geographic Readers*). Washington, D.C.: National Geographic (2009).

Lunis, Natalie. *Green Tree Frogs: Colorful Hiders (Disappearing Acts)*. New York: Bearport (2010).

Zoehfeld, Kathleen Weidner. *From Tadpole to Frog*. New York: Scholastic (2011).

Learn More Online

To learn more about frogs, visit www.bearportpublishing.com/AnimalDiaries

Answers

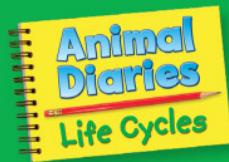
Correct frog life cycle diagram for page 22



About the Author

Ellen Lawrence lives in the United Kingdom. Her favorite books to write are those about animals. In fact, the first book Ellen bought for herself, when she was six years old, was the story of a gorilla named Patty Cake that was born in New York's Central Park Zoo.

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A Frog's Life

Jay heard loud snoring noises coming from the pond. His dad said male leopard frogs were calling to female frogs. So the next morning, Jay went down to the water where he found big blobs of floating frog eggs. Read Jay's diary to find out what he learned as he watched the eggs eventually change into grown-up frogs. The process took several months, but it was pretty amazing!

A Butterfly's Life A Frog's Life A Kangaroo's Life

A Snake's Life A Spider's Life



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