



Identification Guide

There are three species of frogs in New Zealand which produce loud calls at, and around, ponds to attract females and protect individual male territories. These species belong to the Australian genus *Litoria* and *Ranoidea* and can be easily differentiated from our native protected species (*Leiopelma*), which are rare, essentially silent and confined to undisturbed native bush.

The key provided below is simple to use. Each question has two options and you must decide which option to follow. The number at the end of each option tells you which question to go to next. Continue to follow the correct option for your frog and you will eventually arrive at the correct identification.

Question 1

Frog produces a loud mating call - go to question 5.

Frog does not produce a loud mating call - go to question 2.

Question 2

Frog has an obvious external eardrum - go to question 7.

Frog has no external eardrum - go to question 3.

Question 3

Frog from nose to rear is larger than 60 mm - go to question 9.

Frog is less than 60 mm - go to question 4.

Question 4

Frog has the ends of its toes or fingers expanded into distal pads or suckers - go to question 7.

Frog does not have suckers on its fingers or toes - *Leiopelma* species

N.B. - These frogs are protected by law, please do not capture or disturb them. Take a photo and record their exact position and pass this information on to the nearest office of the Department of Conservation.

Photos by Oscar Thomas



Hochstetter's Frog
Leiopelma hochstetteri



Hamilton's Frog
Leiopelma Hamilton



Archey's Frog
Leiopelma archeyi

Question 5

The call is a set of harsh grunts or groans - go to question 6.

The call is a cricket-like trilled creak or whistle - *Litoria ewingii* (Brown Tree Frog)

Question 6

The call is set of simple harsh croaks - *Ranoidea raniformis* (Southern Bell frog).

The call is a prolonged, descending three-syllabled drone - *Ranoidea aurea* (Green and Golden Bell Frog)

Question 7

The frog is in the genus *Litoria*, use the following questions to determine which species it is.

Frog has a distinct green or pale stripe down the mid-line of its back - *Ranoidea raniformis* (Southern Bell frog).

Frog does not have a distinct line down its back - go to question 8.

Question 8

Frog has pads on the ends of its fingers scarcely wider than digits, it is small (<60 mm), an overall brown back, usually with a broad dark stripe from the nostril, through the eye to the armpit, and has orange thighs - *Litoria ewingii* (Brown Tree frog).

Frog has slightly to poorly-developed toe or finger pads, it usually has an overall green coloration with a silver or white stripe or ridge running from eye to groin area and blue thighs. Adults can be quite large (>70 mm) - go to question 9.

Question 9

Frog has a many prominent bumps or warts on its back and very poorly developed toe or finger pads - *Ranoidea raniformis* (Southern Bell frog).

Frog has a very smooth back, with expanded tips to its fingers and toes which are one and a half times wider than toes or fingers- *Ranoidea aurea* (Green and Golden Bell Frog).

Photos by Carey Knox



Brown Tree Frog
Litoria ewingii

Southern Bell Frog
Ranoidea raniformis

Green and Golden Bell Frog
Ranoidea aurea