

## **Amphibian Egg Mass Identification Book**

### **American Bullfrog**

Bullfrog egg-masses are laid mainly in June and July, although they can be found as early as May and as late as August. Masses can contain up to 20000 eggs. The whole egg-mass is large, flat and floats close to surface of the water or is draped on submerged vegetation. Eggs hatch within 3 to 5 days of being laid depending on water temperature.



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### **Northern Red-legged Frog**

Egg masses are globular with jelly that is soft and pliable to the touch. Roughly the size of a grapefruit, they are attached to vegetation 15 cm or more below the water surface. As the embryos develop, the jelly becomes looser and the egg mass tends to break free of its attachment, often flattening out and floating to the surface. Eggs hatch out in approximately 4 weeks depending on water



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### **Oregon Spotted Frog**

Females lay egg masses of hundreds of eggs that are free floating and typically found in shallow water of less than one foot. The mass is a moderately soft jelly. Masses are visible along the surfaces of the water and often found near the shore of still water or slowing moving bodies of water. Females will frequently lay on or near other masses resulting in large quantities of eggs in one area. Eggs hatch in 18-30 days depending on water temperature.



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### **Pacific Tree Frog**

Females lay small egg masses about half the size of a tennis ball, and attach them to submerged aquatic vegetation. Masses can have 10-80 eggs, but average about 25 eggs. Each egg mass is soft and irregularly shaped, and does not hold its shape out of water. One female can lay 20-30 clusters in one breeding season. Eggs hatch in approximately 2-3 weeks depending on water temperatures.



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### Western Toad

Females will deposit long strings of black eggs in shallow water with bottom vegetation. Multiple females will deposit eggs in the same location, resulting in hundreds to thousands of eggs deposited in one area. Egg strands will be present just below the surface of the water. As the eggs develop, the casing will expand and become cloudy. Eggs will hatch in 1-2 weeks depending on water temperature.



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### Rough-skinned Newt

Eggs are laid singly. Egg tan above, cream below. The egg jelly is thinner than the egg and retains shape out of water, rubbery. Eggs are deposited on the pond bottom or attached to vegetation a few inches under the surface. Eggs contain the same chemical toxin as in the adults. Eggs will typically hatch in 20-26 days depending on the temperature of the water.



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### **Northwestern Salamander**

Females lay 30-270 eggs at a time in firm masses that are roughly the size of a grapefruit. Egg masses are typically attached to a submerged branch or rigid vegetation. The egg mass will begin to show beneficial algae in the internal capsules. Eggs hatch in 2-9 weeks depending on water temperature.



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### **Long-toed Salamander**

Eggs are laid in lumpy masses along grass, sticks, rocks, or the mucky substrate of a calm pond. The number of eggs in a single mass can be up to 110 eggs per cluster. The eggs are sometimes laid singly. Masses are made of a gelatinous, runny outer layer with distinct separate jelly layer encapsulating each egg. Eggs hatch in 2-6 weeks depending on water temperature.



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### Others that may confuse—Bryozoan colonies

Bryozoans are aquatic animals. They occur in both salt and freshwater. The most common freshwater bryozoa we have here is the “Magnificent Bryozoan”, *Pectinatella magnifica*. It is an exotic species, native to eastern United States. At this point, it does not appear harmful to our native ecosystem. Some consider an indicator of good water quality. It starts from a spore-like form which grows and divides to form a larger colony. They are translucent, gray, and jelly like in appearance and can be quite small to football size. Look for tiny little black flecks in them. These are the little “spores” or statoblasts that will be released when the jelly dissolves.



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### Others that may confuse — Terrestrial Mollusk

Snail and slug eggs may be confused with amphibian eggs if they are a mollusk species that lays a jelly mass. They are usually buried under moist topsoil or along the edge of freshwater which may become inundated during flood events. In those cases, where they may come loose and be seen “underwater” they can be misinterpreted for amphibian egg masses.

