



Geocrinia

Is Your Frog a White or Orange-bellied Frog ?

Use this guide to identify your frog as either a White-bellied frog (*Geocrinia alba*) or Orange-bellied frog (*Geocrinia vitellina*, pronounced "vit-el-lina").

WHITE-BELLIED and ORANGE-BELLIED FROGS

Adults of both these frogs are about 18 - 30 mm long measured from the tip of the snout to the back of the join of the legs. (called the snout-vent length) See Fig.1 The pattern on the back is a series of dark spots arranged in lines: in some lines the spots are small, in others the spots are larger. The spots are dark brown to black and are visible against the lighter brown to olive coloured skin.

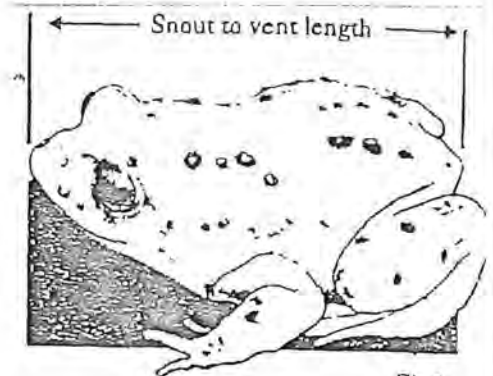


Fig.1

A. The ORANGE-BELLIED FROG (*Geocrinia vitellina*)

Only one species of frog found in south-western Australia has a bright yellow to orange underside (ventral surface) and is aptly named the Orange-bellied frog. This colour is about the same as egg-yolk and extends from the chin past the arms and about a third of the way towards the legs. See Fig. 2



Fig.2

B. ALL OTHER FROGS

All other frogs can be easily be split into three groups based on body size, body shape or other obvious features.

1) Burrowing Frogs - Large frogs (45 - 85 mm snout-vent length) with squat, round bodies, squarish heads, short arms and legs. See Fig. 3 On the inside edge of their heel all burrowing frogs have a raised, calloused area of skin used for digging called the metatarsal tubercle. This tubercle may be black, light brown or colourless. See Fig.4 Young specimens are smaller but have the same basic body shape as the adults and the metatarsal tubercle is obvious.

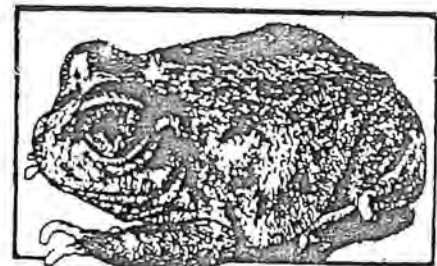


Fig.3

2) Tree Frogs - All tree frogs have a readily visible, dry, tough looking eardrum (tympanum) just behind the eye and sucker-like discs on the ends of the toes. See Fig.5 Skin on the underside is rough.



C. The WHITE-BELLIED FROG (*Geocrinia alba*)

3) Conventional looking frogs - (such as the White-bellied Frog) - Adults are small (18-30 mm snout-vent length), with a pointed snout.

- a) If the chin is a dark or a black colour, or the skin on underside is rough, or grey, or black and white, or mottled grey and white then this not a White-bellied frog. See Fig 6.
- b) If the skin on the underside is white or cream but not smooth or the groin area is red or it has bright orange spots at the armpits then this is not a White-bellied frog.
- c) If the skin on the underside is smooth and white this could be either a White-bellied frog or a related species: *Geocrinia leai*.
- d) Look at the pattern on the back of the frog. If there is a well defined, broad band of dark skin with a thin, light coloured line around the edge making a rectangular shape between the eyes and the legs then this is not a White-bellied frog. See Fig.7

e) If the frog has obvious lines of raised spots, some quite large (up to 1 mm across) See Fig.8, running along the back of the animal then **THIS IS A WHITE-BELLIED FROG.**

4) Check the distribution maps to see if your frog occurs within the general area known for White-bellied Frogs. See Map 1 & 2.

If you are outside the area shown on the map but are fairly sure you do have a White-bellied Frog, please call the Recovery Team.

Hint: All species of frogs have the ability to change their skin colour, usually from dark to light in response to their surroundings. When using this guide make note of the colour of the frog when you first capture or observe it. Alternatively keep the animal in a dark location for a few minutes (15 min) prior to attempting identification.

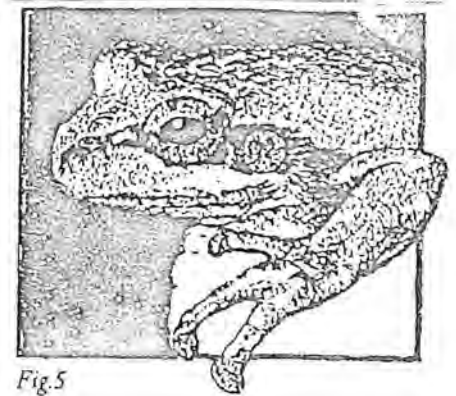


Fig.5

Fig.6

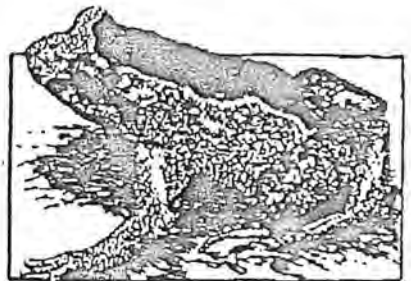


Fig.7

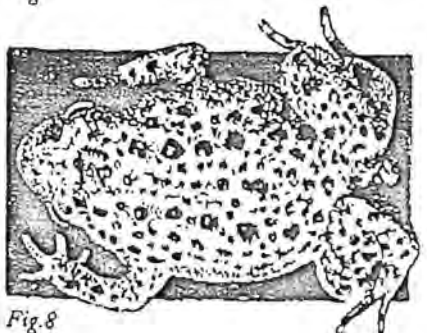


Fig.8