



# 2011 Rouge River Watershed Frog and Toad Survey

Friends of the Rouge  
 University of Michigan-Dearborn  
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[www.therouge.org](http://www.therouge.org)

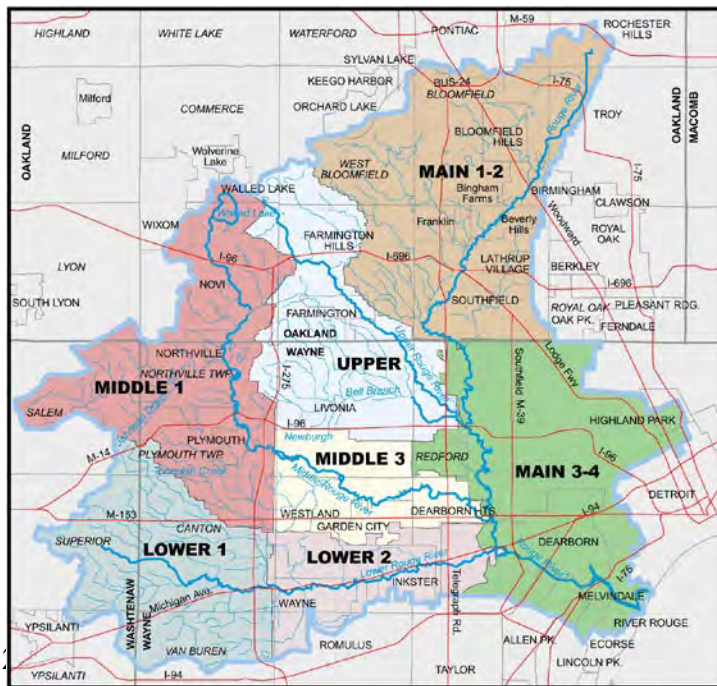
The Rouge River Watershed Frog and Toad Survey is a volunteer listening survey that has been coordinated by Friends of the Rouge since 1998. Volunteers are trained to recognize local frog and toad breeding calls and survey quarter-square-mile blocks within the Rouge River watershed from March through July. The purpose of the survey is to collect baseline data on the distribution of frogs and toads within the watershed as well as to give residents of an urbanizing area a positive experience with their local natural areas. The survey is supported by a grant from the Rouge River National Wet Weather Demonstration Project and donations from Rouge communities and participants.



## Summary of Volunteer Effort

This was the fourteenth year of the Rouge River Watershed Frog and Toad Survey. There were 200 attendees at the four survey training workshops and 363 volunteers signed up to survey 372 blocks in 248 teams. We received complete data for 158 survey blocks (see Table 1 below).

### Chart 1: Rouge Subwatersheds



**Table 1: Survey Blocks by Subwatershed**

Sub-watershed	# Blocks Surveyed	Avg. # Species Heard
Main 1-2	48	2.9
Upper	24	2.9
Middle 1	45	4.1
Lower 1	22	4.9
Lower 2	8	3.6
Middle 3	6	2.3
Main 3-4	5	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	

## 2011 Survey Results

In 2011, the subwatershed with the highest average number of species heard was the Lower 1 with an average of 4.9 species calling per block. Lower 1 contains Canton Township and parts of Plymouth, Salem, Superior Township, Ypsilanti, the northern part of Van Buren and is in the watersheds headwaters. The second highest average was in the Middle 1 subwatershed (2010's highest average) with an average of 4.1 species per block. Middle 1 contains Plymouth, Northville, Novi, and parts of Walled Lake and Salem Township. The subwatershed with the lowest average number of species heard was the Main 3-4 with 2.2 species per block. The Main 3-4 is the most industrialized downstream portion of the Rouge River so this would be expected.

Overall it was a fairly average year for frogs and toads in the Rouge Watershed. Five of the eight species found in the Rouge had averages that were less than observed in 2010. Bullfrogs and Northern Leopard

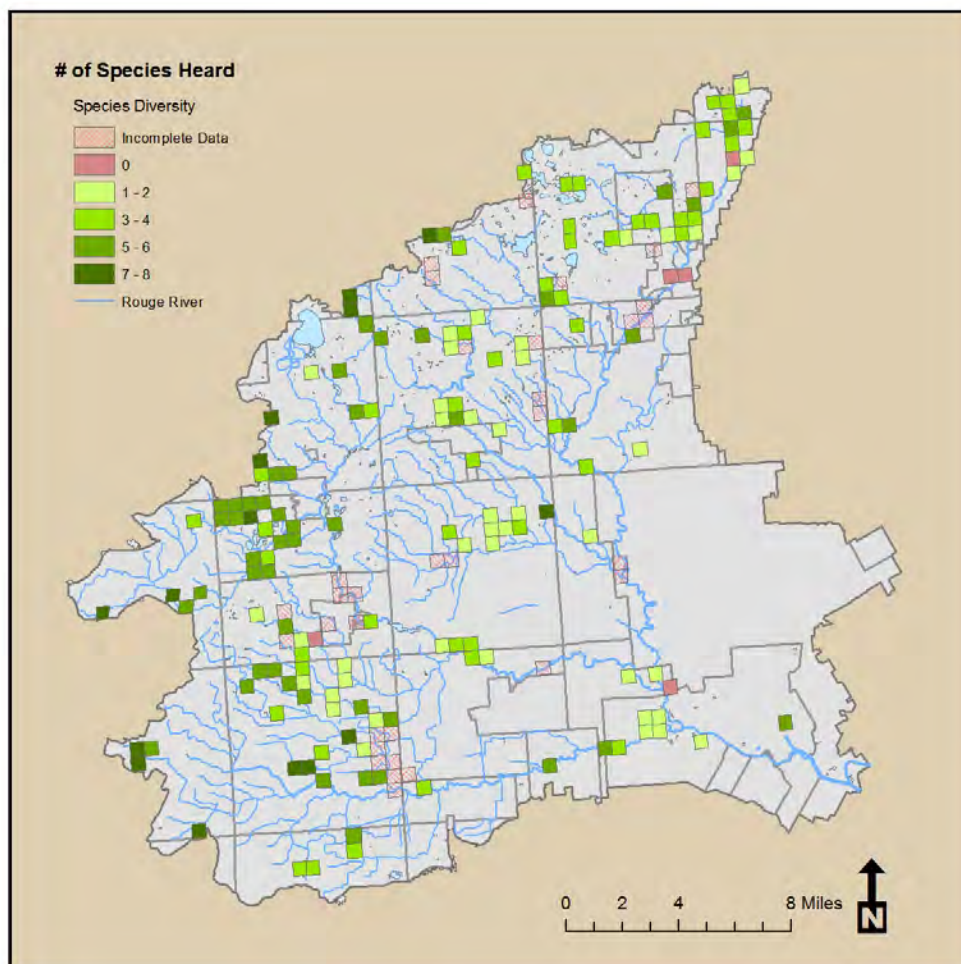
Frogs were heard in the same number of blocks as 2010 and Spring Peepers were the only species to see an increase in their average from last year's survey. Compared to the overall average, Western Chorus Frogs and Spring Peepers were heard in fewer blocks while Wood frogs, American Toads, Northern Leopard Frogs, Gray Treefrogs, Green Frogs and Bullfrogs were heard in a higher percentage of blocks than average.

**Table 2: Percent of blocks in which species was heard, 1998-2010**

Species	'11	'10	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03	'02	'01	'00	'99**	'98*	Avg. 01-11
Wood Frog	25	27	27	24	29	19	29	19	23	20	17	14	30	55	24
W. Chorus Frog	39	49	46	47	57	49	57	46	48	52	49	50	64	80	49
Spring Peeper	50	49	46	56	62	55	57	41	45	50	47	48	67	83	51
American Toad	80	88	84	89	87	78	74	61	62	71	58	49	50	54	76
N. Leopard Frog	19	19	14	18	21	12	22	5	18	8	9	5	5	--	15
Gray Treefrog	54	62	48	53	64	48	57	37	40	35	37	47	40	--	49
Green Frog	64	72	68	74	70	70	64	51	53	39	38	15	30	--	60
Bullfrog	17	17	12	22	17	10	22	10	13	5	7	0	2	--	14

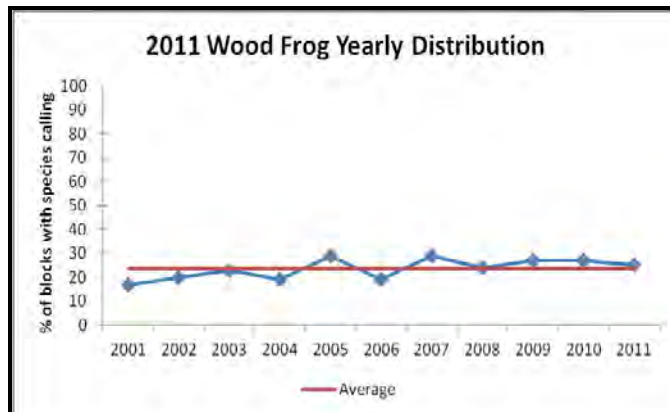
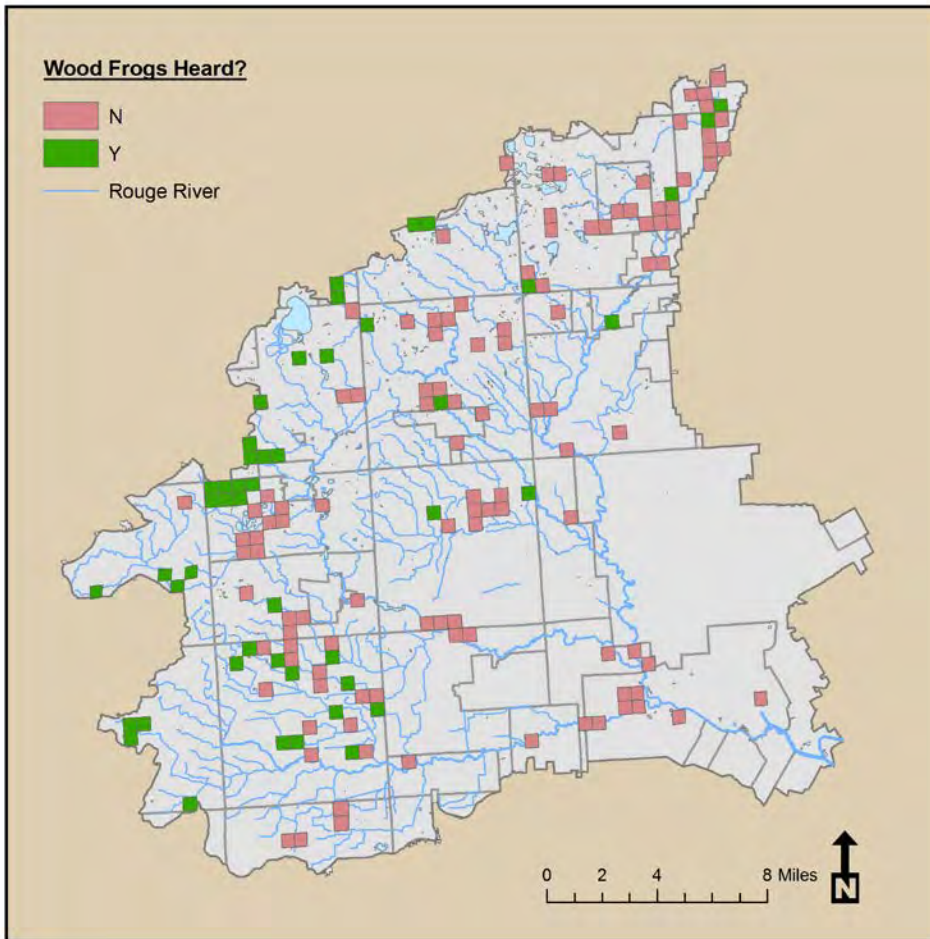
\*Only 'Middle 1' subwatershed surveyed  
 \*\*Only 'Middle 1' and 'Lower 1' subwatersheds surveyed

**Chart 2: 2011 Total Species Diversity**



# 2011 Wood Frog Distribution

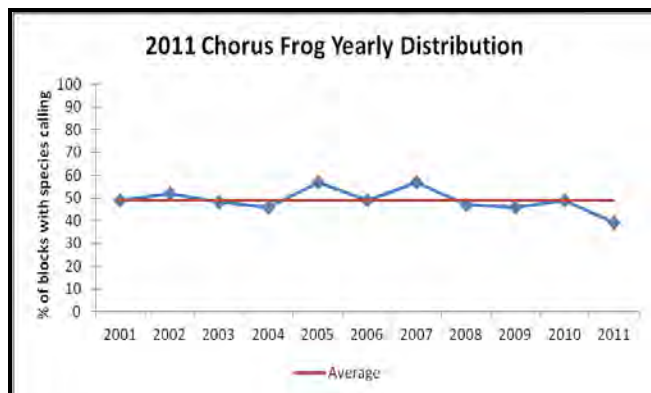
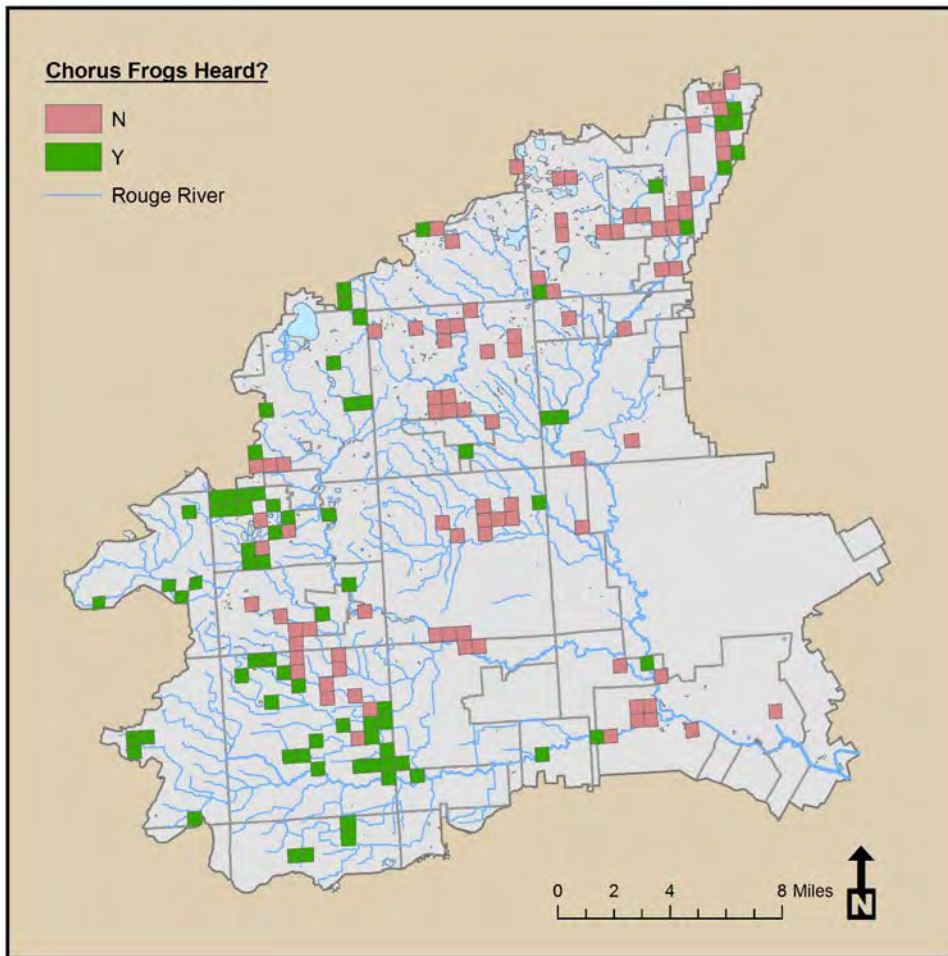
*Rana sylvatica*



Wood Frogs were heard in 25% of all watershed blocks and all but the Middle 3, Lower 2, and Main3-4 subwatersheds. The percentage of blocks with Wood Frogs calling was lower than last year but slightly above average for what has been heard 2001-2010.

# 2011 Western Chorus Frog Distribution

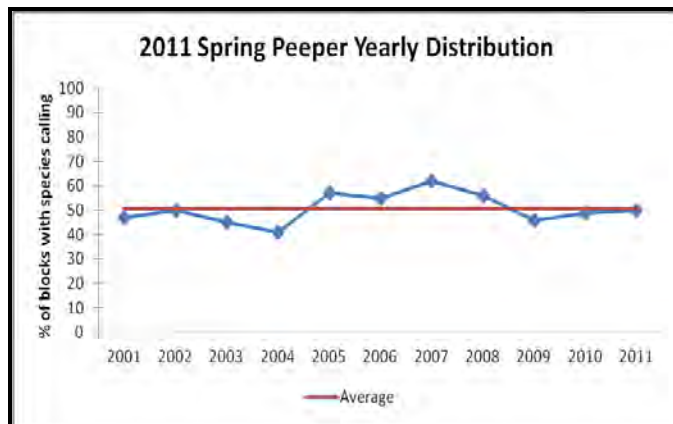
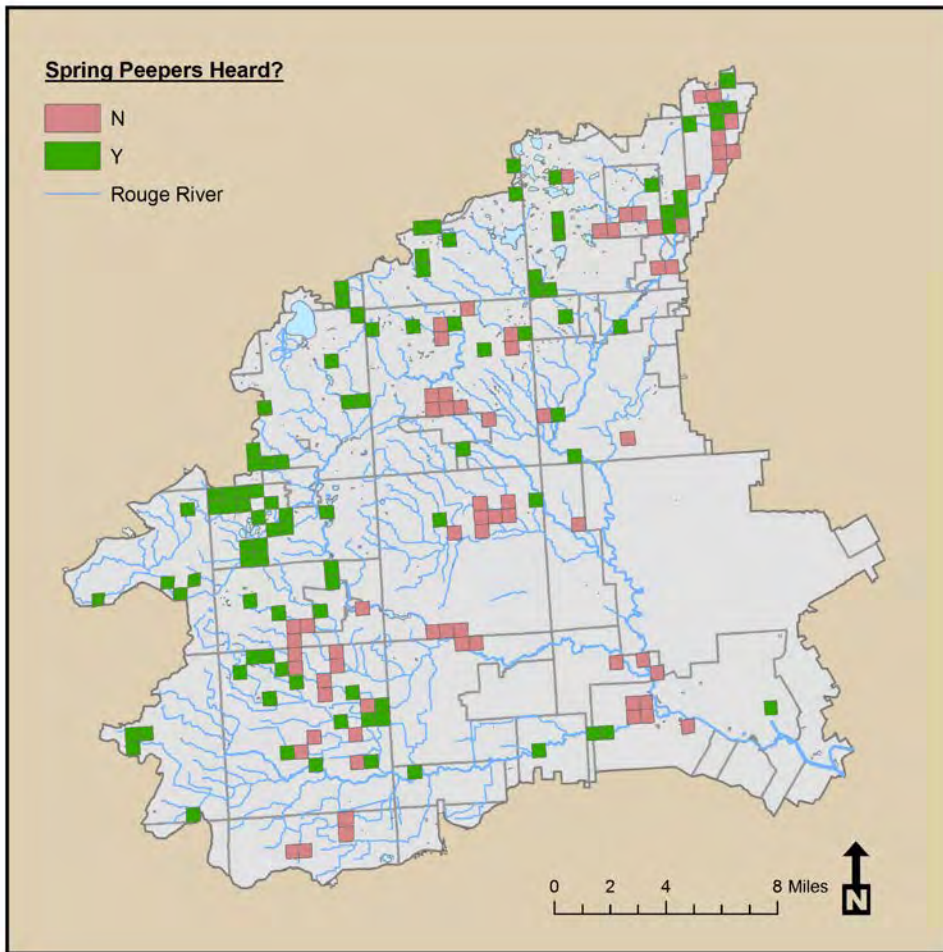
*Pseudacris triseriata*



Western Chorus Frogs were heard in 39% of survey blocks and in all but the Middle 3 subwatershed. In comparison to last year, there were less Chorus Frogs heard and less than the overall average.

# 2011 Spring Peeper Distribution

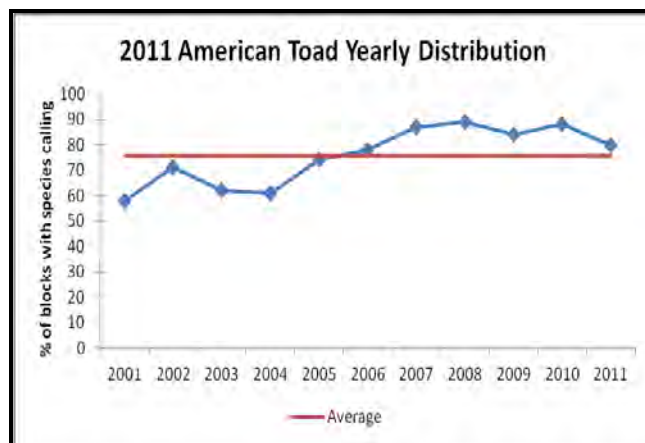
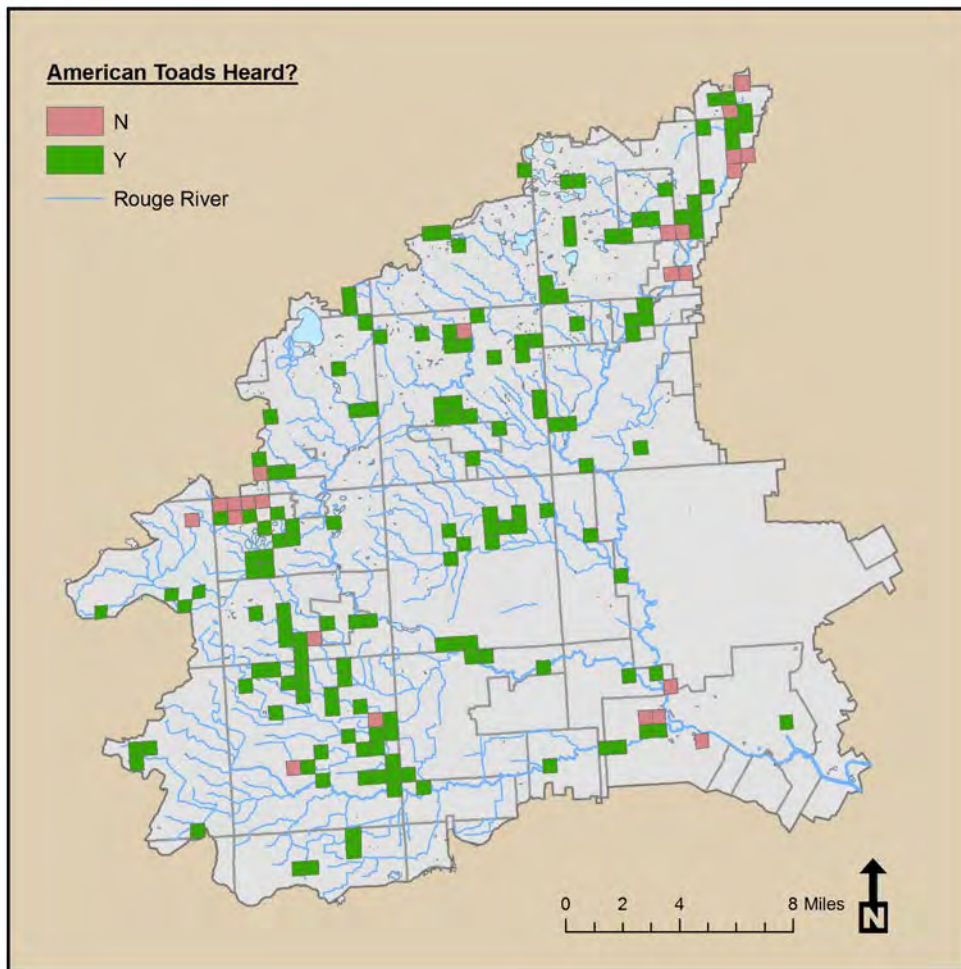
*Pseudacris crucifer*



Spring Peepers were heard in 50% of survey blocks and in all but the Middle 3 subwatershed. They were heard in more blocks than last year but slightly less than the overall average.

# 2011 American Toad Distribution

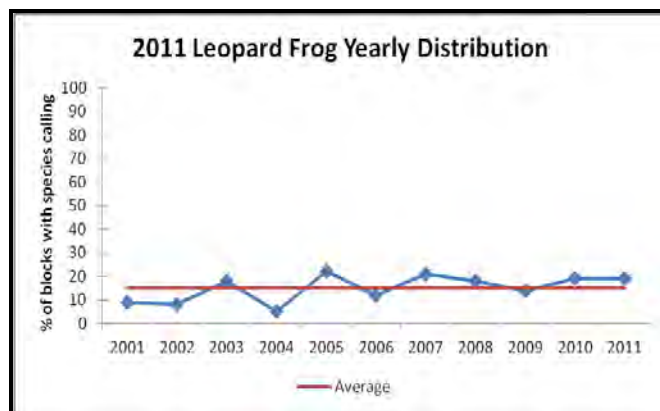
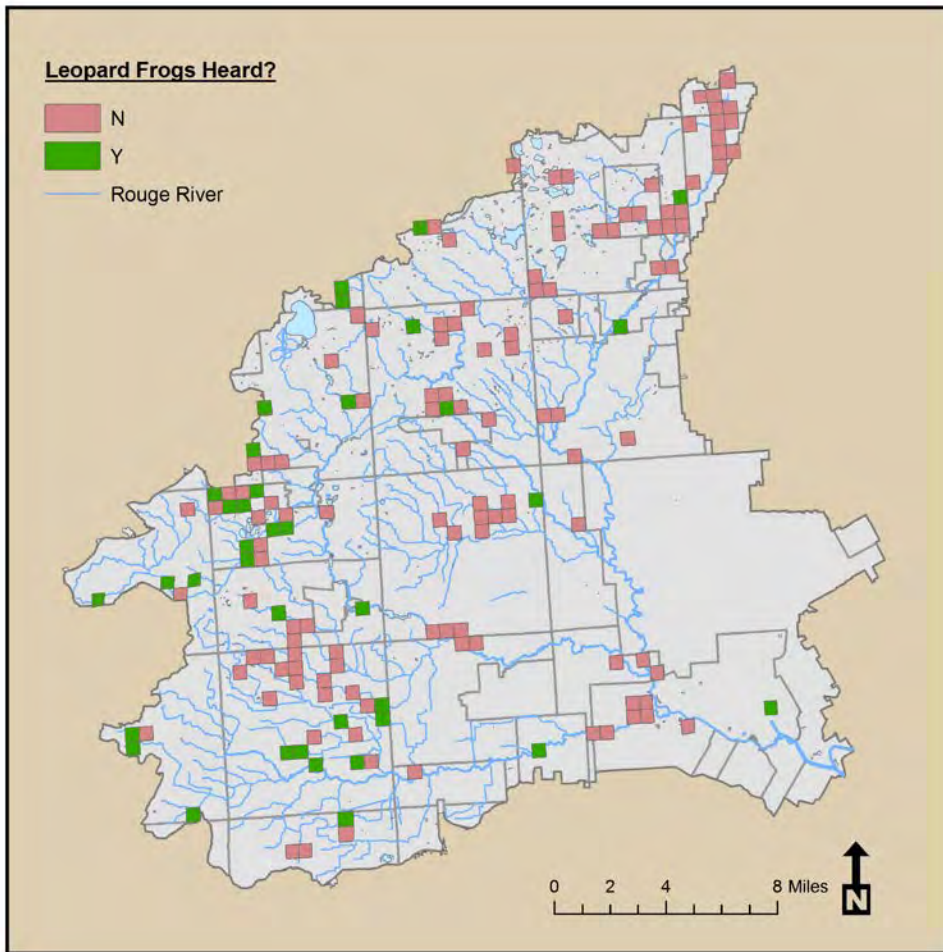
*Bufo americanus*



The American Toad was the most commonly heard frog or toad as it has been since 2001. Heard in 80% of all blocks, the American Toad was heard in a lower percentage of survey blocks than last year but more than the overall average.

# 2011 Northern Leopard Frog Distribution

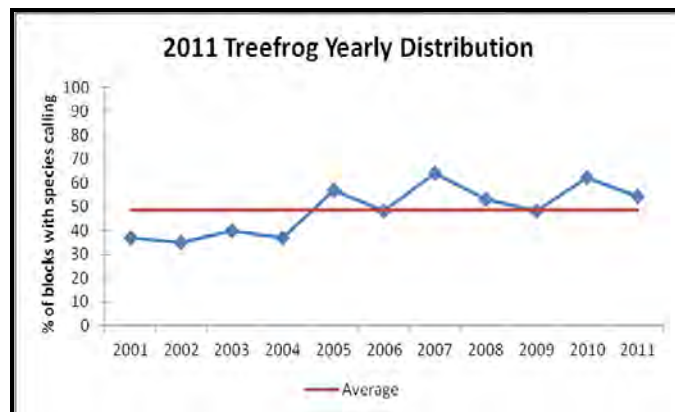
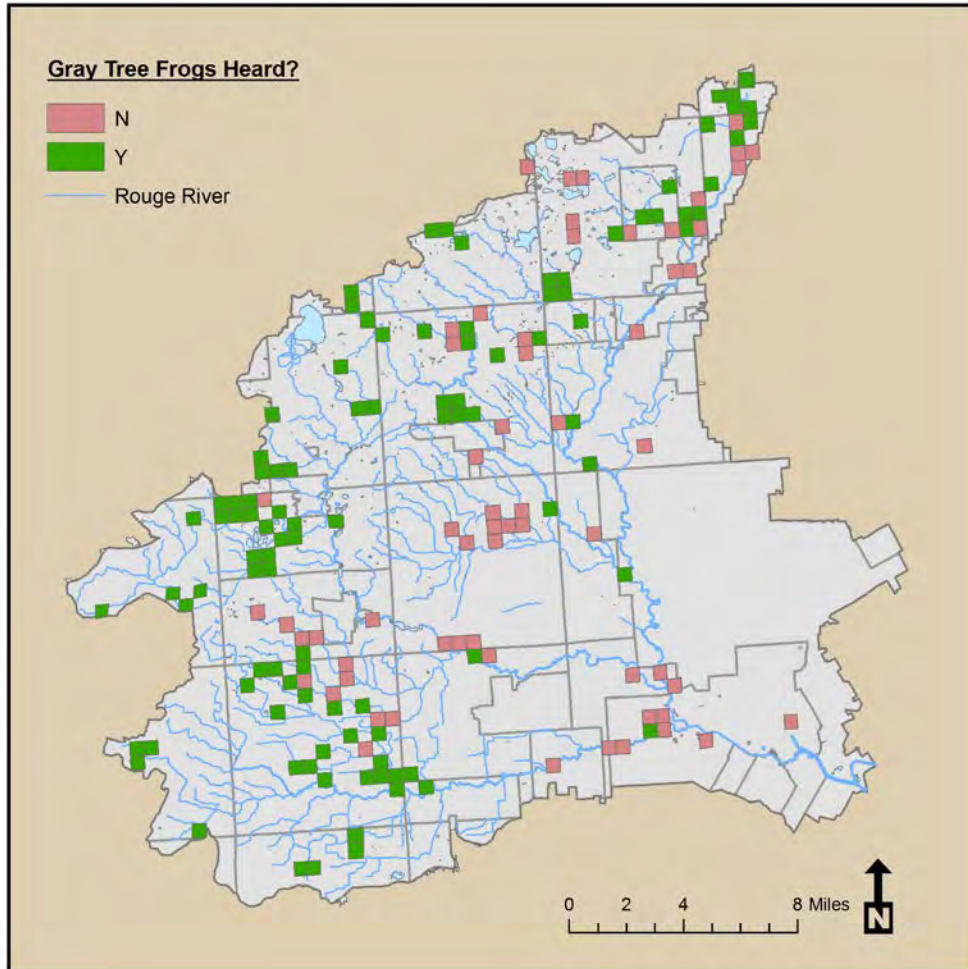
*Rana pipiens*



Northern Leopard Frogs, one of the most sensitive species in the watershed, were heard in 19% of the survey blocks this year. This is the same as last year and above average for the species. They were heard in all of the subwatersheds with the exception of Middle 3. Surprisingly, Leopard Frogs were heard calling at the Ford Rouge Plant (lower right corner of map). A group of employees surveyed the wetlands near the Ford Truck plant and heard five species in the midst of this industrial area.

# 2011 Eastern Gray Treefrog Distribution

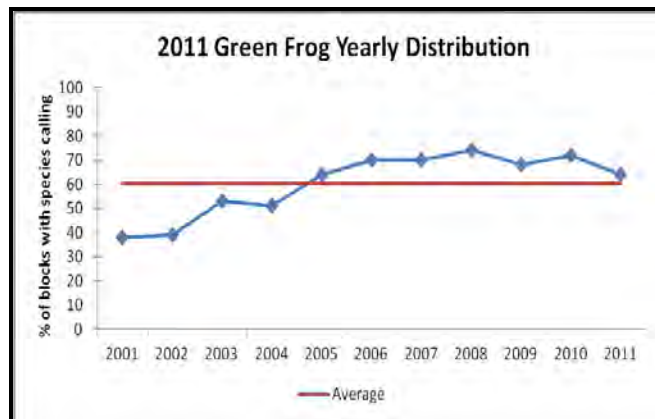
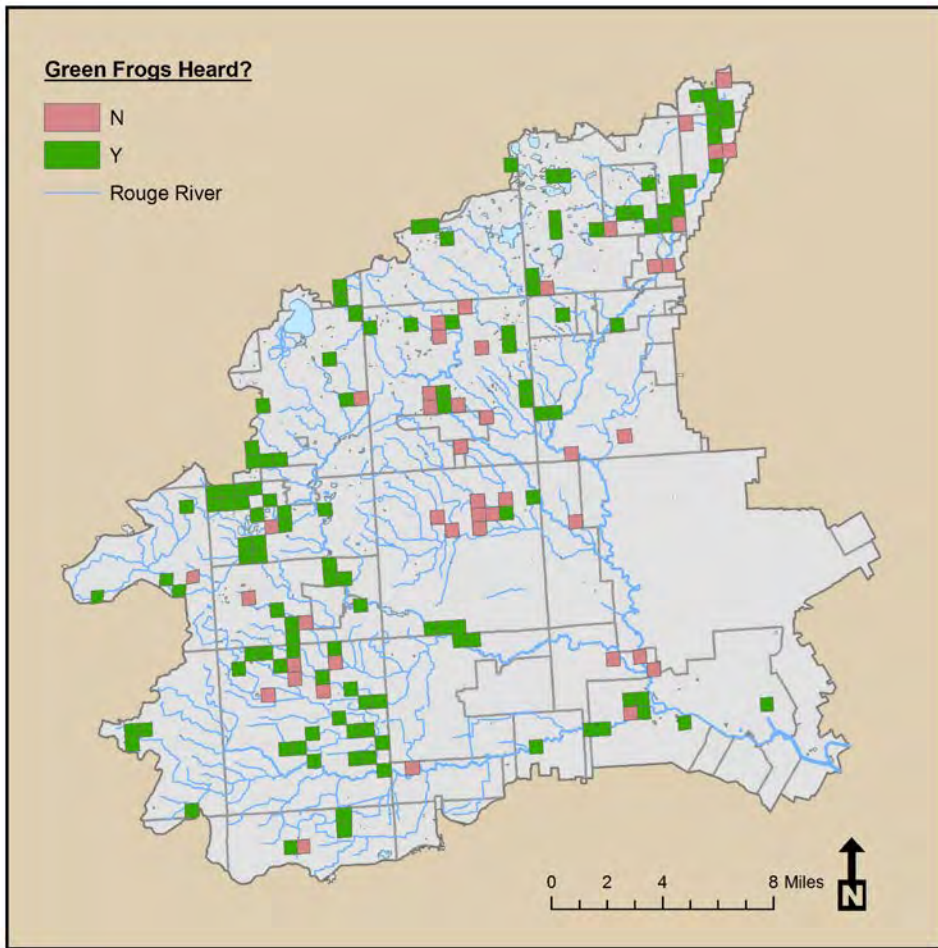
*Hyla versicolor*



Gray Treefrogs were heard in 54% of the survey blocks and in all of the subwatersheds with the exception of Main 3-4. They were heard in fewer blocks than last year, but above the overall average. They also were heard for the first time in the Dearborn area.

# 2011 Green Frog Distribution

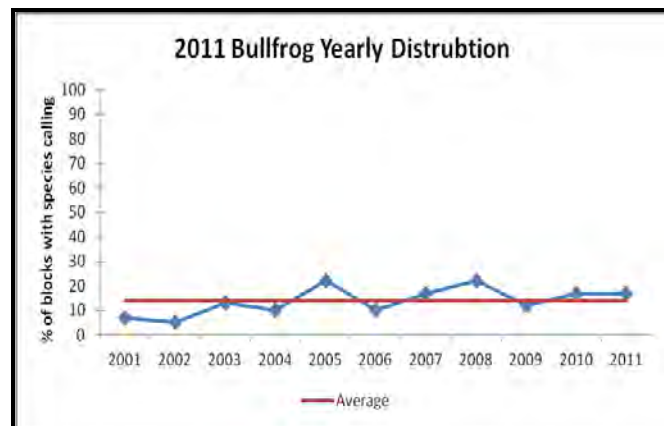
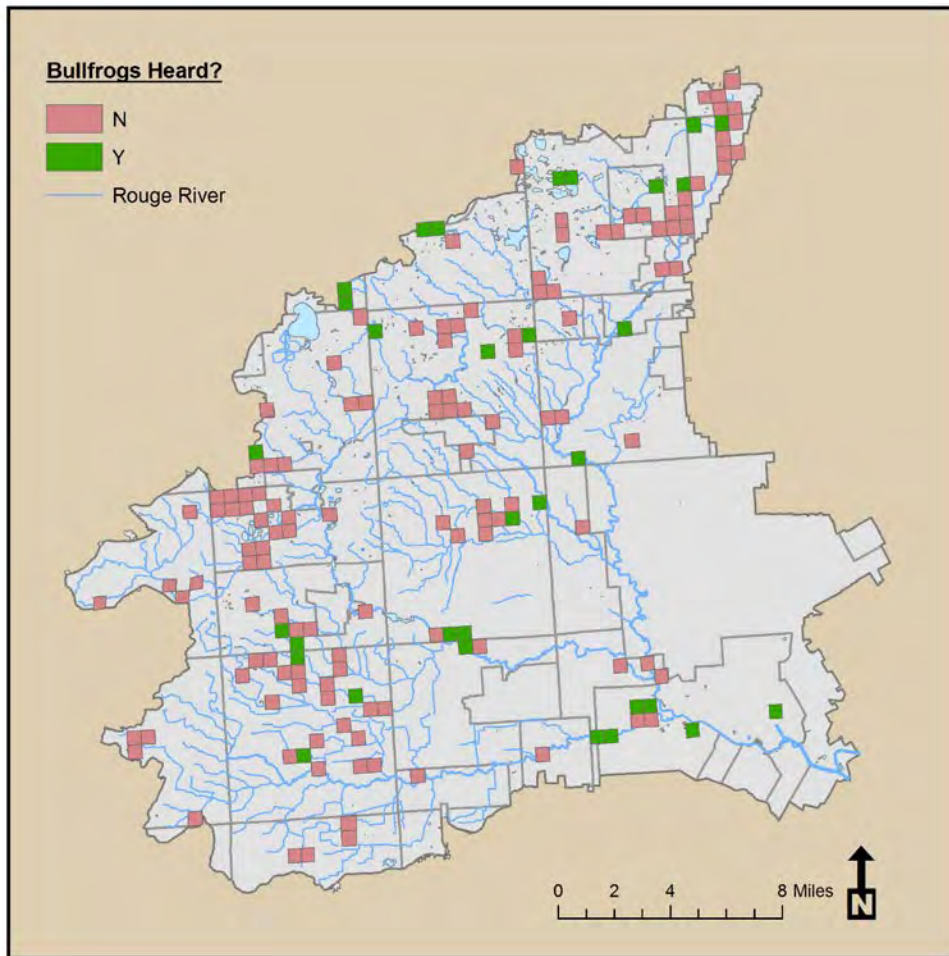
*Rana clamitans*



Green frogs were heard in 64% of the survey blocks and in all seven subwatersheds. This is lower than last year but slightly above the overall average for Green Frogs. They were heard calling both at the Ford Rouge Plant and at the Greenfield Village Oxbow.

# 2011 Bullfrog Distribution

*Rana catesbeiana*



Bullfrogs were heard in 17% of survey blocks and in all seven subwatersheds. This is the same as last year and above the overall average.