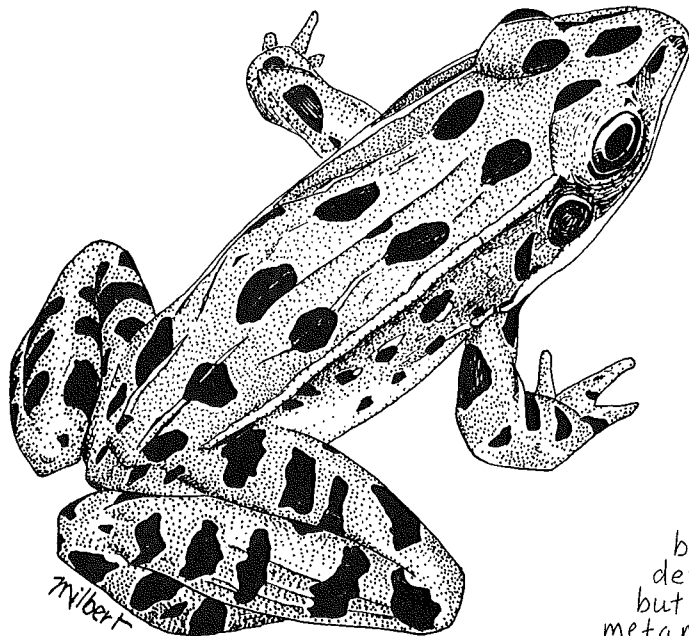


# River Bend Naturalists Notebook

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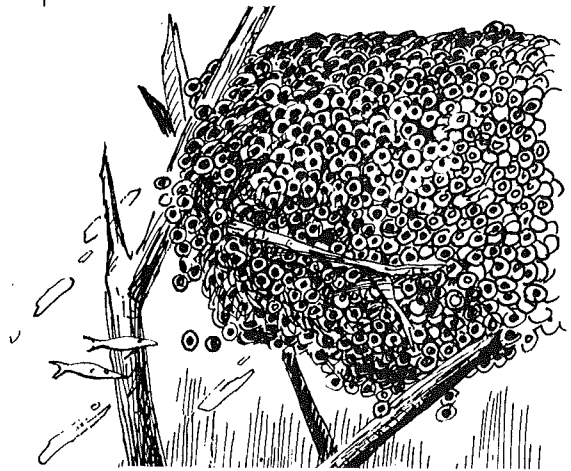
## LEOPARD FROG

*Rana pipiens*



The Leopard Frog is a large green frog with black spots rimmed with white, thus its name. It is considered one of the most beautiful frogs and is very common in marshes and around ponds, reaching a maximum length of about 4". Hibernation takes place in the mud bottoms of ponds and under litter. They burrow head first into the mud instead of backing into it as do the toads.

In spring the low guttural croaking — like the sound of rubbing two balloons together — can be heard in the ponds at the Nature Center.



The eggs are laid in masses, attached to dead twigs, weed stalks or other support material found from a few inches to a foot or so beneath the surface. Egg and tadpole development varies greatly with weather, but usually by early July newly metamorphosed frogs will be abundant.

The food of the Leopard Frog consists of various insects and spiders. Its enemies are varied as this abundant species is a source of food for many carnivorous reptiles, birds and mammals, such as the Garter Snake, American Merganser, Great Blue Heron, and various hawks. In its tadpole stage it is a source of food for fishes. Perhaps the greatest destruction of the leopard frog is caused by traffic during the mass movements of the frogs crossing the roads to and from ponds.