



Hylodes gryllus.

HYLODES.—*Fitzinger, non Dumeril et Bibron.*

GENUS HYLODES.—CHARACTERS. Mouth large, and furnished with a large subcordiform tongue, free and movable in its posterior half; teeth in the superior maxillary and palate bones, the latter in two groups between the posterior nares; tympanum visible; extremities slender, tips of fingers and toes terminating in slightly developed tubercles.

HYLODES GRYLLUS.—*Leconte.**Plate XXXIII.*

CHARACTERS. Head elongated, pointed, a triangular dusky spot between the orbits; body above cinereous, with a green, or sometimes red, vertebral line, and three oblong black spots, margined with white on the sides. Length, 18 lines.

SYNONYMES. Savannah Cricket, *Bartram*, Trav., &c., p. 278.

Rana gryllus, *Leconte*, Ann. Lyc., Nat. Hist. N. Y., vol. i. p. 282.

Rana gryllus, *Harlan*, Med. and Phys. Res., p. 104.

Rana dorsalis, *Harlan*, loc. cit., p. 105.

Acris gryllus, *Dumeril et Bibron*, Hist. Nat. des Rept., tom. viii. p. 507.

DESCRIPTION. The head is elongated and rather pointed at the snout, greenish above, with a black triangular spot between the orbits of the eyes, with its apex backwards. The mouth is large, and the palate is armed with two thick groups of minute teeth, situated on a line with the posterior border of the posterior nares, and widely separated.

The nostrils are lateral, and nearly midway between the orbits and the snout. The eyes are large and prominent, the pupil black, the upper half of the iris brightest golden, the lower black. The upper jaw is dusky, with a yellowish-white line from the posterior and inferior border of the orbit to the axilla. The chin and throat are yellowish-white.

The body is much elongated, slender, and dusky above, with a vertebral line of bright green, or sometimes reddish-brown, which bifurcates at the occiput and runs to the superior part of the orbits of the eyes. On each side of this vertebral line are two or three large oblong spots, with white margins. The flanks are grey; the thorax and abdomen are silver-white.

The anterior extremities are small and delicate, dusky above, with a black blotch near the elbow; beneath they are clouded white; there are four fingers, distinct, very delicate, and slightly developed at the extremities. The posterior extremities are very long, dusky above, and barred with black; the lower surface is dirty flesh-colour; there are five toes, long, and fully webbed, with their extremities still more rounded and developed.

DIMENSIONS. Length, 1 inch 6 lines; of thigh, 7 lines; of leg, 8 lines; of tarsus and toes, 1 inch 1 line.

HABITS. This is a merry little frog, constantly chirping like a cricket, even in confinement; it frequents the borders of stagnant pools, and is often found on the leaves of aquatic plants, and rarely on the branches of such low shrubs as overhang or dip in the water. It feeds on various kinds of insects, and makes immense leaps to secure its prey, or to escape its pursuers. It can easily be domesticated, and takes its food readily from the hand; I have kept several for months in a glass globe on a few sprigs of purslain, (*portulacca oleracea*,) feeding them occasionally with flies. Their chirp, at times, was incessant, and sprinkling them with water never failed to render them more lively and noisy.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION. The *Hylodes gryllus* is found on the Atlantic coast from latitude 43° to the Gulf of Mexico, and is very abundant in Carolina and Georgia; but as yet I have no evidence of its existence west of the Alleghany mountains.

GENERAL REMARKS. The first notice of this animal is found in Bartram's Travels in Carolina and Florida; he calls it the Savannah Cricket, and gives a tolerable account of its manners. This animal forms a good connecting link between the genus *Rana* and *Hyla*, and seems to partake of the habits of both, for though it likes water at all times, yet it may be found on aquatic plants waiting for its prey; and it has the power of adhering to smooth surfaces like the *Hylæ*, but much less perfectly, as it can never sustain itself on the under surfaces of leaves, &c.

For the present I am disposed to arrange this animal with the *Hylodes* of Fitzinger: for 1. The extremities are slender, with the fingers and toes only slightly swelled at the tips; and, 2. It cannot belong to the genus *Rana*, as it wants a bony sternum, &c.*

Dumeril and Bibron have established a new genus, *Acris*, for the reception of this animal and the *Cystignathus nigrinus*; but I see no reason for removing it from that of *Hylodes*, especially as thier genus is characterized by having the toes free.

* See the Anatomical part of this work.



Holbrook, John Edwards. 1842. "Hylodes gryllus – Leconte." *North American herpetology; or, A description of the reptiles inhabiting the United States* 4, 131–133. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.326853>.

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