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"North Georgia Mountain Choir"

Amidst the sounds of the birds singing, squirrels chattering, and the coyote howling, we are graced by the sounds of one of nature's most

tones. Sitting out on the deck in the evening, especially after a light rain, the frogs will sing back and forth from far away distances to capture their mate. It has been reported that the singing of a frog can be heard by another as far as a mile away, under the right circumstances. When the wind blows from their direction to the other the sounds will carry much further, and when the frogs establish their mate by sound, they will travel through the trees, through the marshes, over stumps, and



vocal creatures. The frogs and toads create a choir effect within the boundaries of the forest, singing back and forth to one another as if to be talking on the telephone for hours; sometimes it is as if they are trying to outdo one another with their high range croaking.

Several different types of frogs and toads live in our area, the most common of which is the **Oak Toad and Carpenter Frog**. Often the sounds of the Carpenter frog are heard during the Spring and Summer calling their potential mates for a rendezvous in the woods. Once the mating ritual has been completed the frogs find shallow pools of water, and ponds to lay their eggs. Soon tadpoles are swimming frantically around the pond awaiting growth and metamorphosis before turning into a more recognizable form. Once the metamorphosis has occurred, where they have left their tail behind in the pond, they emerge from the water continuing on with the music for us to hear and enjoy.

Adapted for climbing trees, several of the **Amphibia Class, and in the Order of Anura**, the tree frogs climb high into the Majestic Oak and Pine trees that we are surrounded by to broadcast their ranges of chirping, croaking, and vibrato

through creeks to meet the mate they had been courting.

Frogs and toads are not only identified visually, but are also identified by the sounds they make. The Carpenter Frog, *aka Rana Virgatipes*, have a short raspy tenor vibrato sound, whereas the Oak Toads, *aka Bufo quercicus*, have a chirping sound similar to that of new born chicks. The Mountain Chorus Frog, *Pseudacris brachyphona*, are the frogs that catch my attention more than others. They have an elongated tenor vibrato voice that seems to challenge the best of human operatic tenors. The sound coming from deep within their throat emits such a sound that at times they will eclipse the sounds of the annoying cicada. Unlike other types of frogs in the area, the Mountain Chorus Frog lay their eggs on vegetation found throughout the woodland carpet.

A great website to visit that has the sounds/detailed information of the above listed frogs/toads, among many others, is: <http://wwknapp.home.mindspring.com/GAFrogToad.html>. (Make sure that you raise the volume on your computer speakers to get the full effect of the recordings.)

(Website used in this article by permission from Walter Knapp).