

## What can I do?

You can help to protect the amphibians of Dominica and the Caribbean by taking the following precautions:



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- Do not touch frogs unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Never move a frog from one area to another or from one island to another.

- Clean and dry all equipment and footwear between visiting sites where wild amphibians live.

## Government action

The Dominican government has made it illegal to hunt or eat mountain chicken or to possess these frogs or parts of these frogs. It is now also illegal to import frogs or frog products to Dominica.



## Can I do more to help?

The mountain chicken is now regarded as being at risk of extinction.



- Respect Dominica's natural heritage.
- Obey the law and do not hunt or eat the mountain chicken.
- Please report any sightings of mountain chickens (healthy, sick or dead) to the Forestry and Wildlife Division, Botanical Gardens, Roseau.

**Tel:** 448 2401 ext 3416/3417  
**Email:** [agrivet@hotmail.com](mailto:agrivet@hotmail.com)  
[forestry@cwdom.dm](mailto:forestry@cwdom.dm)

## What else is being done?

On 1st April 2005, a three-year collaborative project was started to protect Dominica's amphibians from the disease threat. This work involves the Forestry and Wildlife Division and the Veterinary Services Division of the Dominican Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, the Zoological Society of London and other international conservation organisations. This project is being funded by the UK Government's Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species.

For more information, please visit our web site at:

[www.mountainchicken.org](http://www.mountainchicken.org)



**Division of Agriculture  
Livestock Development Unit  
&  
Forestry and Wildlife Division**

## Saving Dominica's Amphibians



**Mountain chicken (Crapaud)**

© Richard Gibson / DWCT

**How you can help to save the  
unique amphibians of the  
Caribbean from extinction.**



## Dominica's unique amphibians

There are four types (species) of amphibian in Dominica.

- **Mountain chicken (Crapaud)** - this is the best known of Dominica's amphibians. It is one of the largest frogs in the world and is now found only in Dominica and Montserrat
- **Gounouj** - first discovered in 1994 and is very special since it is only found in the highlands of Dominica and nowhere else in the world
- **Tink frog** - found on several islands in the Lesser Antilles
- **Johnstone's whistling frog** - introduced to Dominica in the 1980s from other islands in the region



## Dominica and the Mountain chicken

The crapaud is the traditional national dish of Dominica (hence its other name of mountain chicken - its meat tastes like chicken, but the frog lives mainly in the lowlands and not in the mountains!). Its importance to the Dominican culture is also reflected by its inclusion in the national Coat of Arms.

## Amphibians are in trouble

Since the 1980s, amphibians have been declining all over the world. One of the reasons is the emergence of a new epidemic disease, called chytridiomycosis, which is now considered to be a major cause of amphibian population declines and extinctions world-wide.

### The cause

Chytridiomycosis is a fungal disease that infects the skin of frogs and other amphibians.

The fungus can only be seen under a microscope.

In some cases, skin sores (ulcers), reddening and sloughing (shedding) of the skin can be seen.



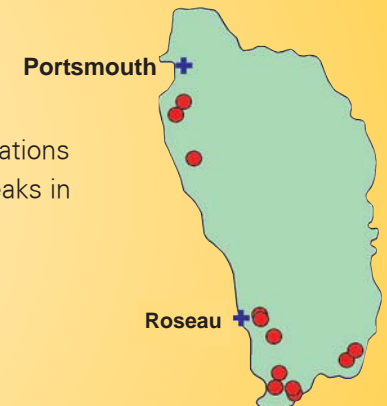
### Disease outbreaks

Outbreaks of this disease can have devastating effects on amphibian populations; in Central America, Australia the USA and Europe the disease has caused catastrophic declines of amphibians. As far as we know, only amphibians are at risk from this disease.

## Chytridiomycosis & Dominica

On the 3rd December 2002, the first outbreak of this disease was reported in the village of Galion, Dominica. The disease quickly spread and dead mountain chickens have since been found in

- La Haut                      ElmsHall
- Bagatelle                    Coulibistrie
- Soufriere                    Doublanc Valley
- Fab                             Milton Estate



## Mountain chicken declines

It is estimated that chytridiomycosis has killed so many frogs that the population of mountain chickens declined by about 70% between December 2002 and March 2004. Outbreaks of the disease are still occurring and threatening the mountain chicken.

We do not yet know what effect the disease is having on Dominica's other amphibians.