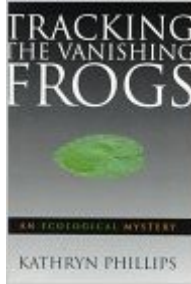


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# Tracking The Vanishing Frogs: An Ecological Mystery



## Synopsis

In 1990, when a group of scientists sounded an unusual alarm about the declining number of frogs in the world, journalist Kathryn Phillips heard their call and followed them as they sought out the reasons for this intriguing situation. Here she provides an in-depth report of this fascinating investigation. Photos.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (9 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

Purchased for school class and the teacher wanted it after they were done (we were going to donate it to the class anyway for future students who couldn't afford it). It was in excellent shape and better than the teacher's copy. It is now the teaching copy for that class and the teacher's old copy is available for future students to borrow.

This is a wonderful book which covers the current issue of declining amphibian populations well in regards to the pet trade, habitat loss and fragmentation, and exotic species as well as specific species such as the golden toad and California's red-legged frog. It's an adventure as well as a source of information. The only reservation I had was that it didn't cover chemicals (pesticides) or frog deformities as issues towards species loss.

This is a fascinating and gripping tale about an animal that is simple, slimey, and generally not well thought of by humans. Our desensitization to the legitimate role in our world of reptiles and amphibians

(from the bible to the Sound of Music) has left them without an advocate when they need it most. Kathryn Phillips explains why their loss is anything but insignificant. In the old days, coal miners would take a canary into the mines with them and listen to it sing all day. If the canary stopped singing and fell over dead, the miners didn't stop to wonder why or grieve its passing, they got the heck out of the mine as fast as they could. That was the very reason they took the canary in with them. Frogs are the canaries on this earth. But here on earth, we don't have the easy option of just getting the heck out of here as fast as we can. Kathryn Phillips tells you why with the power of a fiction writer but does it as only a professional journalist could with clarity, accuracy and completeness.

This book reports on scientists' efforts to discover why populations of many frogs have seemingly gone into a steep decline over the last 50 years. Phillips is a science journalist from California. In this book, she describes interviews and interactions she had with some scientists seeking to uncover the reasons for declining frog populations, especially in California and Costa Rica. She observes and assists some leading herpetologists in the field as they gather data about frog populations. She also discusses their research findings, in which a variety of environmental changes ranging from habitat loss to the ozone hole to climate change all seem to be playing a role in stressing many frog populations to the point of extinction. The book includes a set of color plates showing many of the frogs discussed in the text, and a long bibliography for those interested in further reading. I found the book quite compelling. Although it was written over 15 years ago now, the research that Phillips reports in the text still isn't widely known outside the small world of frog specialists. This is a highly informative book and a great place to begin understanding the stresses of the modern world on frog populations.

Anyone interested in frogs MUST read this book. It is a thrilling adventure through the days and nights of frog behavior and environmental management that makes you realize just how fragile some aspects of our planet are. This book reads like a novel; you start caring for these small creatures like they were your friends. Hard to put down. Easy to enjoy.

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