

# Cope's Gray Treefrogs and the Department of Defense

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Department of Defense  
OFFICE OF PREPUBLICATION AND SECURITY REVIEW

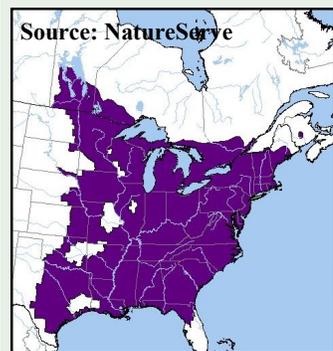


Picture by Seth Berry

**Cope's Gray Treefrog (*Dryophytes chrysoscelis*) is a common frog species on military lands and is widely distributed across eastern North America. Sometimes called "tree toad," its trill-like call can sometimes be heard from the treetops during the day in spring and summer.**

**Description:** Adult Cope's Gray Treefrogs are typically 1.25 - 2 in (3.2 - 5.1 cm) in length. It is similar looking to the Gray Treefrog (*D. versicolor*) and is best distinguished by its more rapid trilling call. These frogs have bumpy skin and are extremely well-camouflaged on tree bark. While usually a mottled gray, they can also be brownish or greenish. There are dark-bordered whitish spots beneath the eyes and the hidden inside of the thigh is a bright yellowish-orange.

**Range:** This species ranges across most of the southeastern and central USA and part of south-central Canada.



Source: NatureServe

**Habitat:** Cope's Gray Treefrogs are habitat generalists and may be found in wooded areas and woodland edges (including woodlots in prairies), usually within a few hundred meters of water. This species is often found in recently disturbed areas with abundant shrubs, herbaceous growth, and vines.

**Behavior:** This frog is both arboreal and terrestrial. When inactive, Cope's Gray Treefrogs may hide in tree holes, under bark, under leaves, or under tree roots.

Eggs are laid and larvae develop in temporary or permanent waters of flooded ditches, puddles, river sloughs, creeks, and small ponds, where there are woody branches or extensive herbaceous growth along the edges. Males call from the water surface or from vegetation or ground near water. It is not uncommon to hear males calling from the edges of chlorinated swimming pools, but these are not places where tadpoles could survive.

**Military Interactions:** This is among the most common frog species confirmed present on DoD properties and is typically encountered both in military training and housing areas.

**Conservation Status:** Cope's Gray Treefrog has no federal conservation status. It has a NatureServe Raking of G5-Secure, and is listed as Least Concern by the IUCN Red list. It is state-endangered in New Jersey and considered a state Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) in a few other states at the periphery of its range.

**Threats/Planning Considerations:** There are no major threats to this species. Maintenance of fish-free breeding sites and areas with forest and/or shrub habitat is recommended.

Occurrence on Military Lands	
Confirmed	Potential
Confirmed present on 86 military properties (10 Air Force; 44 Army; 6 Marine Corps; and 26 Navy).	Up to an additional 73 military properties (24 Air Force; 22 Army; 2 Marine Corps and 25 Navy).

