

# Final Fantasy IX Qu's Marsh FAQ

by SoftReset

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- FINAL FANTASY IX -  
- QU'S MARSH FAQ -  
by  
SoftReset

- Version 1.00 -

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## - Introduction and Overview -

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Welcome to my guide! The Qu's Marshes in Final Fantasy IX have been a mystery for a long time. No one knew why their frogs might take forever to breed, or why their frogs sometimes disappeared, or what purpose that Gold frog served except that leaving him behind seemed to help. The lack of knowledge has been a source of frustration due to frog-catching being tied to Quina's 9999 damage Frog Drop attack, Quina's ultimate weapon, and the fight against the optional boss Quale. This guide will provide that knowledge and give tips on how to

speed the frog regeneration process along.

There are some basic facts to note before getting into the technical details of the marshes. First, frog growth and regeneration is strictly time-based; there are no outside factors involved, like Quina's level, stats, nor anything else.

Each of the four marshes handles the passage of time differently, which means each marsh has its own rate of growth and regeneration, and there are limits to how little or how much time is necessary to affect the inhabitants of a pond.

The Golden Frog has a significant positive effect on how much time is required for its pondmates to mature.

Mating is chance-based and can only occur between male & female pairs of frogs. There is no polygamy in the pond.

The Golden Frog is not sexually ambiguous.

The game decides what will happen in the pond the moment you enter a marsh and frequent visits can work against you.

Finally, frog cannibalism is real. Beware.

...and on with the show. Enjoy.

=====  
- Marsh Time Mechanics - [QM.1]  
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To explain how time affects each marsh, an explanation of the in-game timer itself must be given. If you do not understand hexadecimal and/or you hate math, this explanation of the timer may be confusing, but I will be relating it all to real time a little later, so don't worry.

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The in-game timer is a four byte address. The first byte is a ticker, climbing endlessly from 0 to 255 and rolling over to 0 again. Every 60 ticks is a second of in-game time. When the ticker has reached 255 and can only roll over to 0, the second byte increases by 1. When the second byte has reached 255 and can only roll over to 0, the third byte increases by 1, and when the third byte rolls over to 0, the fourth byte increases by 1.

If you open a game save in a hex editor and go to the timer's address, you might see something like this:

2f a3 45 00

This would be the current timer value in hexadecimal, backwards. The game will read this address from the last byte to the first when it needs to know the time. The actual value in hexadecimal would be:

0045a32f

This value then has to be converted to real time for display on the menu screen.

45a32f hex = 4563759 dec

[4563759 / 60] = 76062, the number of seconds that have passed

$[4563759 / (60^2)] = 1267$ , the number of minutes that have passed

$[4563759 / (60^3)] = 21$ , the number of hours have passed

$76062 \text{ MOD } 60 = 42$  ...is how many seconds will be displayed

$1267 \text{ MOD } 60 = 7$  ...is how many minutes will be displayed

A timer value of 4563759 will give a display time of 21:07:42

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The marshes use the timer value, not the menu screen display time, to determine what will happen in the ponds, which is why the explanation was necessary. However, your only visual indication of the timer value \*is\* the display time, so your visits to the marsh will be based on how much time the menu screen says has passed. Now that the relationship between the two is understood, we can relate menu screen time to the marshes' method of time management.

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Whenever you exit a marsh, the timer value is divided by 60 and recorded so that the game will know the last time you visited that particular marsh. When you return, the time value at entry is divided by 60 and weighed against the time of your last visit. The difference between the timer value at entry and the previous time of exit ultimately decides what will happen in the pond.

(Current time of entry) - (Previous time of exit) = t (time passed)

Once this time check has taken place, the result is run through an equation that will determine whether or not the pond's current inhabitants will mature, and if new tadpoles can be born.

Blairsurpass Plains:  $[(t / 60) * 40] / 1000$

Lachenta Wetlands:  $[(t / 60) * 60] / 1000$

Donna Plains:  $[(t / 60) * 90] / 1000$

Lanar Island:  $[t / 60] / 10$

We'll call the result the Marsh Time value, and it's capped at 15. I'll go through an example to show how Marsh Time can be determined using menu screen time along with the timer value.

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14 minutes have passed since the last time you entered the Lachenta Wetlands marsh. That means the timer value has increased by 50400 ( $14 * 3600$ ) since the last visit (not including seconds). Because the recorded time of exit and the current time of entry were divided by 60, you must first divide 50400 by 60 to find t

$t = [50400 / 60] = 840$

Now you can run this value through the Lachenta Wetlands formula to find out if a Marsh Time period has passed.

$[(840 / 60) * 60] / 1000$

$[14 * 60] / 1000$

$[840 / 1000]$

...No Marsh Time periods have passed, which means no time has passed at all according to the inhabitants of the pond. They will not grow, they will not reproduce, and you will have to wait even longer now because the time of exit will update to include this visit. So...

You decide to check in again 25 minutes later. The timer value has increased by 90000 since your last visit.

$$t = [90000 / 60] = 1500$$

$$[[[1500 / 60] * 60] / 1000]$$

$$[(25 * 60) / 1000]$$

$$[1500 / 1000]$$

1

...A Marsh Time period has passed. This will affect the current inhabitants of the pond, and new life can be born.

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Using the above formulas, you can determine the minimum menu screen time that must pass for a single Marsh Time period to pass.

25 minutes outside of the Blairsurpass Plains marsh

17 minutes outside of the Lachenta Wetlands marsh

12 minutes outside of the Donna Plains marsh

10 minutes outside of the Lanar Island marsh

The formulas for Donna Plains and Lachenta Wetlands short-change you slightly on a single period because fractions of a minute will not count. In actuality, a single period in the Lachenta Wetlands marsh is sixteen and 2/3 minutes, and for the Donna Plains marsh it's eleven and 1/9 minutes, but this is only apparent over extended periods of time. For instance, three Marsh Time periods in the Lachenta Wetlands marsh will take 50 minutes of menu screen time, not 51.

In any case, when in doubt, overcompensate. Also, remember that the only time that matters is time spent \*outside\* of the marshes. Any time that passes inside of the marshes will count for nothing.

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- Stages of Maturity -

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[QM.2]

Frog maturity is determined by a level system. Each of your adults, babies, and tadpoles will gain a level for every Marsh Time period that has passed since your last visit. Current level dictates the current stage of maturity. The level cap is 15, but a frog can begin mating when it has reached level 10.

Level 1 to Level 4: Tadpole

Level 5 to Level 9: Baby

Level 10 to Level 15: Adult

If you clear a pond of life completely, a Lv. 1 female and Lv. 1 male tadpole will be automatically generated the next time you visit.

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- The Mating Process -

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[QM.3]

As stated earlier, frogs can reproduce at Lv. 10; however, whether or not a pair of frogs -will- reproduce is chance-based. Each pond has eight slots available for a frog to occupy. At level-up, an adult male and female will "mate" as many times as there are available slots until either a tadpole is born and a slot is filled, or mating fails at every slot. If there are many levels to gain at one time, the mating process will occur before each level up is given.

The chance of successful mating is 128 versus a random number between 0 and 255. If 128 is higher than the random number, the mating is successful. That makes it a 50% chance that a tadpole will be born per available slot.

Leaving multiple frogs of one gender with a single frog of another will not result in multiple chances per level to reproduce. Only couples will mate for the chance to fill available slots.

I'll go through some examples to demonstrate the mating process.

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Time dictates that four levels are to be gained by the pond's inhabitants. You have a male and female in the first and second slots, both at Lv. 10

10 10 -- -- -- -- -- --

The first successful mating is in the fourth slot. The male and female gain a level.

11 11 -- 01 -- -- -- --

The process begins again with the next level to be gained. This time, mating was successful in the seventh slot. The adults and the first tadpole in the fourth slot gain a level.

12 12 -- 02 -- -- 01 --

Two levels left to gain. This time, mating was not successful. However, all the current pond inhabitants get a level up.

13 13 -- 03 -- -- 02 --

The last level to gain. Mating was successful in the fifth slot.

14 14 -- 04 01 -- 03 --

...You now have two Lv. 14 adults and a Lv. 1, Lv. 3, and Lv. 4 tadpole.

-

Time dictates that two levels are to be gained by the pond's inhabitants. You have a Lv. 15 male, a Lv. 11 female, a male and female both at Lv. 12, and a Lv. 8 baby.

15 12 11 12 -- -- 08 --

The first pair mates successfully in the sixth slot. The second pair is unsuccessful. Levels are gained by the adults and the baby.

15 13 12 13 -- 01 09 --

This time, both pairs mate successfully, one in the fifth slot and one in the eighth slot. Levels are gained and the baby becomes an adult.

15 14 13 14 01 02 10 01

...You now have a full pond with five adults and three tadpoles.

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The use of the random number generator allows you to play the odds a little via resets. If you save your game outside of a marsh knowing the best potential outcome for regeneration, you can reset and try again if you end up with less. Using the examples above to demonstrate this idea, if you were sure you had let enough time pass for a new baby or adult frog to be present by your next visit, yet they were not present when you checked the pond, you could reset your game and check again until the random numbers are in your favour.

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- Frog Cannibalism - [QM.4]  
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Yep. It happens. I'd read topics from time to time on GameFAQs where a frantic person told of leaving a bunch of frogs behind only to find them gone a half an hour later. Some speculated that the Golden Frog was somehow to blame, while others suggested that the frogs might have eaten each other. Some thought frogs might simply move on after a period of time. I hadn't experienced the phenomenon of mass frog exodus until I began investigating the mechanics of regeneration, and to be honest, I believed it to be untrue until then.

Well, it's true. You can think of it as cannibalism or evacuation, but the fact is that whatever adults, babies, or tadpoles you leave behind will disappear if they are all the same gender. NEVER leave a single-gender group of frogs behind.

Special note:

A bug exists wherein any frog occupying the eighth slot will not count when the game determines the number of males and females left, meaning that you are still at risk of returning to an empty pond after leaving a male and female behind. It is impossible for you to determine which frog is in which slot just by looking, so... good luck.

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- The Golden Frog - [QM.5]  
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The Golden Frog accelerates the growth of its pondmates by lowering the maturity level requirements. There are actually three variations on the effect the Golden Frog can have on maturity level requirements.

- a) Babies are born at Lv. 1 and become adults at Lv. 2
- b) Tadpoles become babies at Lv. 2 and adults at Lv. 4
- c) Tadpoles become babies at Lv. 3 and adults at Lv. 6

In addition to lowering maturity level requirements, the Golden Frog will change the successful mating chance from 50% per available slot to anywhere from 50% to 100% per available slot.

These bonuses will only apply to the home pond of the Golden Frog.

The particular bonuses of a Golden Frog are determined by chance. For instance, one Golden Frog might set a 75% successful mating chance and set the level of adulthood to Lv. 4, and those bonuses will be in effect as long as it lives. If you choose to eat him, the next Golden Frog to be born may set the mating chance at 62% and set the level of adulthood to Lv. 2.

Only one Golden Frog can exist among the four marshes at any time, and the odds of any newborn tadpole being the Golden Frog are 50% if one does not already exist. A newborn Golden Frog will have the same maturity level requirements as a normal frog, so its appearance won't reflect its status until Lv. 10, nor will its presence have an effect on growth or regeneration until then. However, the bonuses given by it will take effect immediately when it reaches adulthood. Any frogs already present in the pond will be updated to reflect the new maturity level requirements.

Despite popular belief, the Golden Frog is not a hermaphrodite. It will have a specific gender and participate in the mating process. Golden Frogs are at risk of being eliminated by cannibalism or the eighth-slot bug the same as any other frog, but if a Golden Frog is eliminated by cannibalism or the eighth-slot bug, the next tadpole born to its slot will be the new Golden Frog and give the same bonuses as its predecessor.

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- Pond Starting States - [QM.6]

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This is a list of what's in the ponds before you pay your first visit. All of the ponds have a preset frog configuration that is pretty much guaranteed to change when you arrive due to the passage of time, since all ponds begin with 00:00:00 as their time of last exit, but it's interesting to note nonetheless.

Lachenta Wetlands Mist Continent	Donna Plains Outer Continent
Lv. 1 Male	Lv. 1 Male
Lv. 1 Female	Lv. 1 Female
Lv. 5 Male	Lv. 5 Male
Lv. 5 Female	Lv. 5 Female
Lv. 10 Male	Lv. 10 Male
Lv. 10 Female	Lv. 10 Female
Empty slot	Empty slot
Empty slot	Empty slot
Blairsurpass Plains Forgotten Continent	Lanar Island Forgotten Continent
Lv. 1 Male	Lv. 9 Male
Lv. 1 Female	Lv. 9 Female
Lv. 5 Male	Lv. 7 Male
Lv. 5 Female	Lv. 7 Female
Lv. 10 Male	Lv. 13 Male
Lv. 10 Female	Lv. 13 Female
Lv. 10 Female	Lv. 13 Male
Lv. 10 Female	Lv. 13 Female

A Golden Frog that is born on the first visit to the Lachenta Wetlands marsh will not take the appearance of a Golden Frog until after your meeting with Quale, but its effect on its pondmates will be immediate. A Golden Frog is \*not\* a preset of the Lachenta Wetlands marsh, and whichever frog Zidane catches for

Quina will not be removed from the pond data.

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- Tips, Advice, and Codes -

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[QM.7]

If you've read this far, most of what I have to say will be common sense or an affirmation of what you believed intuitively, but I'll recap for those of you who skimmed through or skipped ahead.

1. Always leave a male and female behind.
2. Do not eat the Golden Frog.
3. Do not leave a group of frogs of the same gender alone with a single frog of the opposite gender. There's no point 'cause frog love is monogamous.
4. Do not leave a single gender group behind.
5. Save before you enter a marsh and reset if you get less than expected.
6. The most important tip I can give: constant and frequent marsh visits will stunt your frogs' growth and cost a lot of time. "A watched pot never boils," your mom probably told you once when you were little. She was right.

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If you want to leave the Golden Frog with a single frog of the opposite gender but fear cannibalism, there is a short test you can perform that will tell you the Golden's gender.

Step 1: Eat all but one male, one female, and the Golden Frog, then exit the marsh and save outside on the world map.

Step 2: Go back to the pond and eat either the male or the female. Exit the marsh and enter again, \*without\* saving.

Step 3: ...Should tell you what you need to know. If you ate the female and the pond is empty when you return, the Golden Frog is male. If you ate the male and the pond is empty when you return, the Golden Frog is female. Now, reset your game and eat the right frog first.

This test will guard against basic cannibalism, but the eighth slot bug could still wipe them all out at Step 1. Perform this test at your own risk.

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Cheat codes! This set of codes will fix the previous time of exit at 00:00:00

Lanar Island:           8007b1f0 0000  
                          3007b1f2 0000

Lachenta Wetlands:   8007b1f4 0000  
                          3007b1f3 0000

Donna Plains:           8007b1f6 0000  
                          3007b1f8 0000

Blairsurpass Plains: 8007b1fa 0000  
                          3007b1f9 0000

It'll be easiest to pick one pond to abuse and stick with it. If you can access every pond, I suggest you go with Blairsurpass Plains because its layout makes it easy to catch frogs. The benefit of these codes over codes to adjust the number of frogs caught is that you won't miss out on the gifts Quale gives periodically.



These next codes will put the ultimate Golden Frog in the first slot of the pond of your choosing. If the first slot is already taken, its occupant will become the Golden Frog when you use these codes.

3007b211 0001  
3007b212 00ff  
3007b200 00--

00: Lanar Island  
08: Lachenta Wetlands  
10: Donna Plains  
18: Blairsurpass Plains

This particular Golden Frog will set its pond's maturity level requirements to Lv. 1 baby / Lv. 2 adult and set the successful mating chance to 100%

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- Contact -

[QM.C]  
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I can be contacted at [softreset\(at\)gmail\(dot\)com](mailto:softreset(at)gmail(dot)com). Please do not email me with corrections unless you can back them with solid facts. I can't make corrections with anecdotal evidence. If you provide useful information, I will thank you by name and your contribution will be credited to you. I promise.

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- Version History -  
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- v. 1.00: Corrected a mistake in the starting state of the Blairsurpass marsh, added two more Golden Frog codes, and fixed some typos.
- v. 0.99: Included Golden Frog info, removed false information regarding the cap on Marsh Time, edited time formula information for accuracy, added cheat codes, included a version history, and cleaned the whole thing up a little bit
- v. 0.92: Original submission

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-Thank You -  
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ForteGSOmega: Schooled me about debuggers and MIPS. I couldn't have begun to write this guide without your help.  
Terence: Provided all of the information in this guide regarding the Golden Frog, informed me of the existence of the eighth-slot bug, and gave some good general suggestions for this FAQ. -HUGE- thanks.  
Atomos199: General info and lots of encouragement.  
Lisa: Understanding my tweeky side that needs to do things like this. <3  
GameFAQs: For hosting this guide and being an all-around great site.  
Ike: Tech. support.

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