

AMPHIBIAN SPRING MIGRATION IDENTIFICATION SHEET



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Eastern Spotted Salamander
Ambystoma maculatum

Habitat: Deciduous woodlands, vernal pools and accompanying wetlands. During the year they live under rocks, logs, and leaves.

Identifying Features:

- Glossy black or gray with bright yellow spots
- Slate gray underside
- 6” to 10” (nose to tip of tail)

Wood Frog
Rana sylvatica



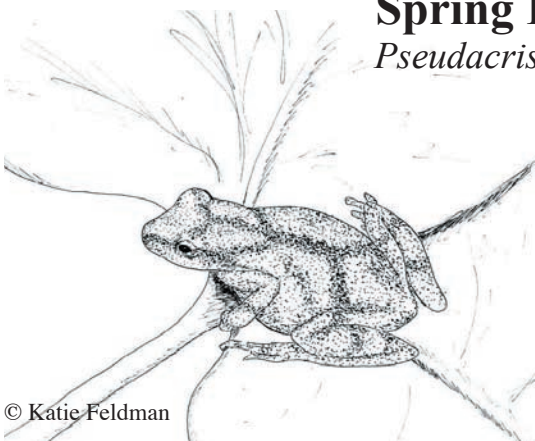
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Habitat: Woodlands, vernal pools, grasslands

Identifying Features:

- Wide range of colors, often brown or gray, sometimes pink or reddish
- Smooth skin
- Pale creamy stomach
- Dark “bandit mask” across the eyes
- 1 1/2”-3” (head and body)

Spring Peeper
Pseudacris crucifer



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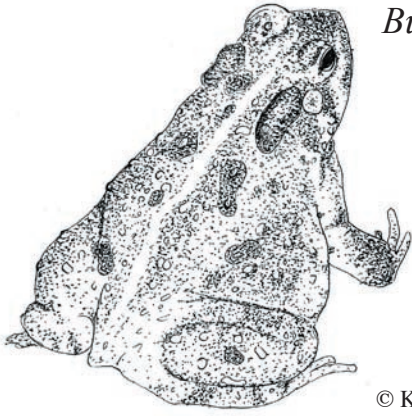
Habitat: Forested wetlands, meadows, floodplains

Identifying Features:

- Gray or brown body
- Smooth skin
- Darker “X Type” pattern on back (hence the name “*crucifer*,” like a cross)
- 3/4 to 1 1/4 inches (head and body)

American Toad

Bufo americanus



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Habitat: Shallow bodies of water for breeding, moist soil. backyards, forests, meadows

Identifying Features:

- Brown or reddish back, lighter stomach
- Skin of back covered with small “warts”
- Two large dark glands behind the eyes
- Stomach creamy with speckling
- 2” to 5” (head and body)

Jefferson Salamander

Ambystoma jeffersonianum



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Habitat: Deciduous woodlands, ponds, ditches, vernal pools

Identifying Features:

- Bluish gray with blue flecks
- More slender snout, body, and toes than Spotted Salamander
- Jefferson-Blue Spotted salamander hybrids are also common
- 4¼” to 7”

Eastern Redbacked Salamander

Plethodon cinerius



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Habitat: Woodlands, forested areas

Identifying Features:

- Reddish stripe on back from base of head to tail
- Gray body
- Some variations have no stripe and are uniformly gray
- 2 ¼” to 4” including tail

For more info check out these websites: Katie Feldman’s page at www.savethesalamanders.org

The Atlas of the Amphibians and Reptiles of Vermont at www.middlebury.edu/herpatlas

The Vernal Pool Association at <http://www.vernalpool.org>

USGS North American Amphibian Monitoring Program at www.pwrc.usgs.gov/naamp,
and The Federal Highway Administration <http://nepa.fhwa.dot.gov/ReNEPA/ReNepa.nsf/home>

Produced by Katie Feldman in collaboration with VINS North Branch Nature Center
Montpelier VT • 05602 • 229-6206 • www.vinsweb.org

Sources: Conant, Roger, and Joseph T. Collins *Peterson Field Guide: Reptiles and Amphibians — Eastern/Central North America*. 3rd edition. Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1991

Other Species Less Commonly Seen During Spring Migration

Green Frog

Rana clamitans melanota

While common in the later spring and summer, Green Frogs are not likely to be seen in early spring

Habitat: Streams, ditches, brooks, ponds, and lakes

Identifying Features:

- Variable colors, but most likely green or brown
- The throat of the male is bright yellow, and that of the female is white
- 2" to 4" (head and body)

Blue Spotted Salamander

Ambystoma laterale

Most often found north of Vermont, any found in our area are likely to be hybridized with the Jefferson Salamander, which they resemble

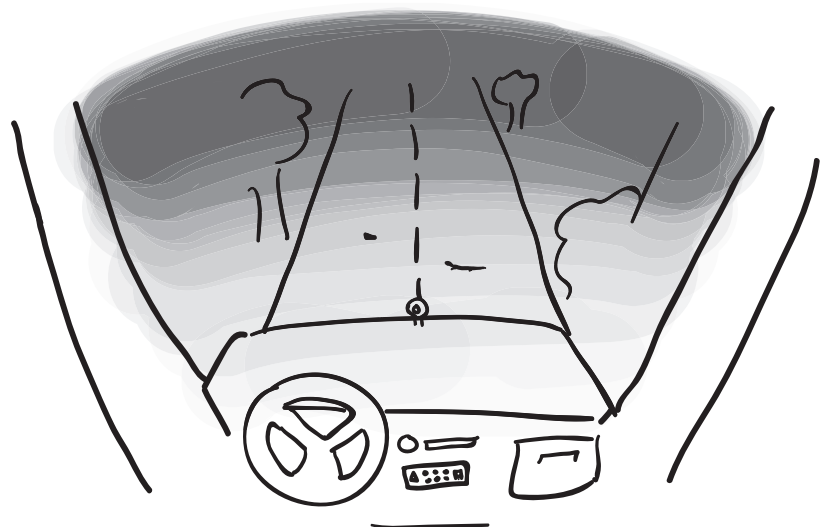
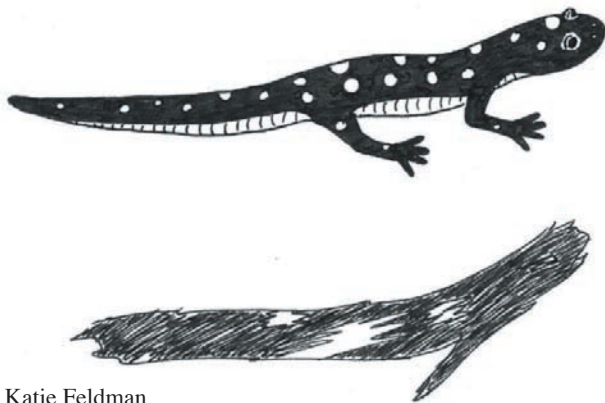
Habitat: Woodlands, vernal pools, ponds

Identifying Features:

- Flecks of blue or bluish white
- Body is black or bluish black
- Similar to Jefferson but darker

For more information on setting up a salamander crossing project go to www.savethesalamanders.org or the VINS website at www.vinsweb.org

An approximate diagram of what salamanders (Right) and frogs or toads (Left) look like from the driver's perspective.



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