

# 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)

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**Wood Frog**  
*Rana sylvatica*



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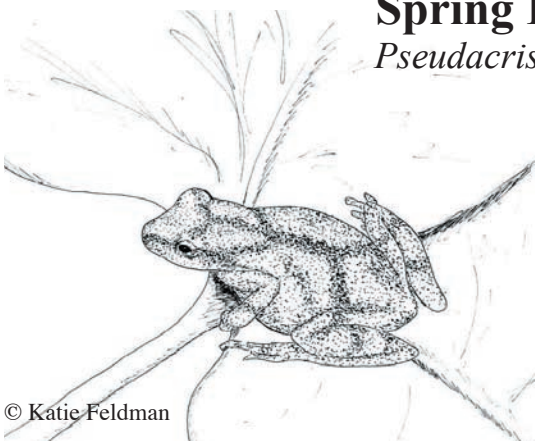
**Habitat:** Woodlands, vernal pools, grasslands

**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)

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**Spring Peeper**  
*Pseudacris crucifer*



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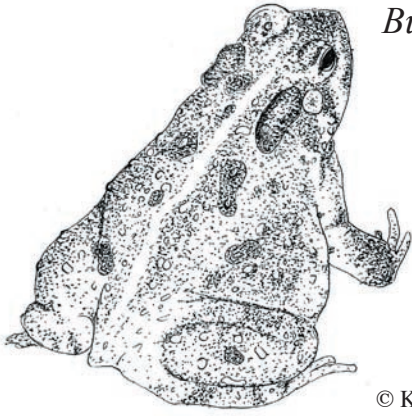
**Habitat:** Forested wetlands, meadows, floodplains

**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)

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## 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”

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## 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

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**For more info check out these websites:** Katie Feldman’s page at [www.savethesalamanders.org](http://www.savethesalamanders.org)

The Atlas of the Amphibians and Reptiles of Vermont at [www.middlebury.edu/herpatlas](http://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](http://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](http://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)

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## 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*

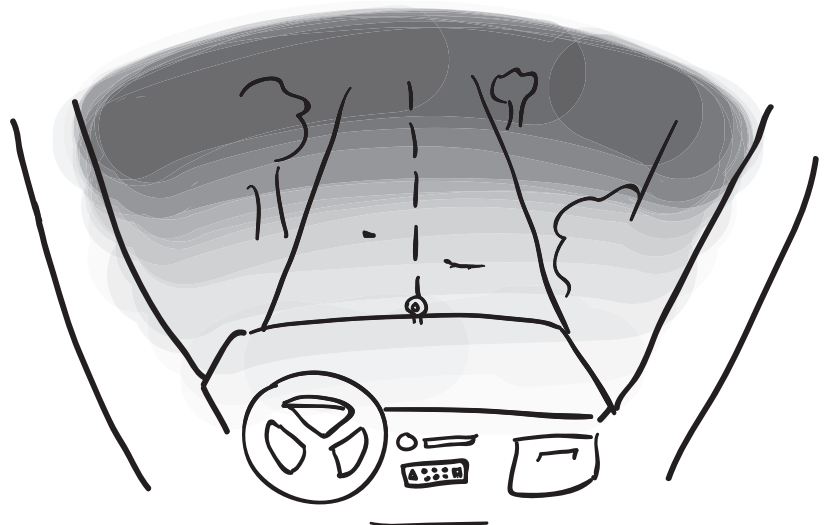
**Habitat:** Woodlands, vernal pools, ponds

### 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](http://www.savethesalamanders.org) or the VINS website at [www.vinsweb.org](http://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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