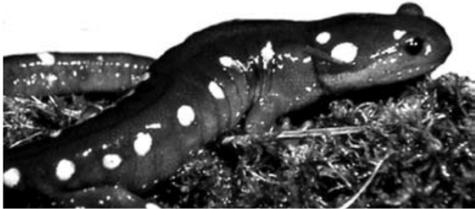


What Crossing Guard Volunteers Do

Crossing Guard Volunteers help reduce salamander and frog mortality at sites where these amphibians must cross roads to reach their breeding pools. Most volunteers also assist with data collection. The long-term survival of vernal pool breeding amphibians is threatened in areas fragmented by roads. The loss of these amphibians will impact the viability of more remote pools, and will degrade the forest food web. Helping salamanders cross roads is fun, but it's also important.



Amphibian migration takes place:

- ❖ Between mid-March and late April
- ❖ When the ground has thawed
- ❖ Temperatures are above 40° F
- ❖ It is raining or very wet
- ❖ At night

Sign up for email alerts by sending an email to Cindy Sprague cindys@madriver.com. Put "salamander" in the subject heading.

What time should I arrive at my site?

If conditions are ideal, salamanders will begin moving at dark, but you might not see them in large numbers until later in the evening—after 9 pm

What do I do when I get there?

Volunteers walk up and down the section of road where the salamanders and frogs are crossing. When an amphibian is found, it is gently picked up and moved across the road in the direction it is heading. If other volunteers are there, you can team up with them or coordinate which sections of road you want to cover. If there are several volunteers at one site, someone could help control traffic.

Be patient. Amphibians may be moving even if you don't see them on a single pass through the site.

Collecting data

Keep a count of the numbers of each amphibian species you find. Count dead amphibians too, and record separately. Remove the dead ones from the road so they are not counted again. Download a data sheet from the Town of Huntington website <http://huntingtonvt.org/> then click on "Boards and Commissions" and select "Conservation Commission." You can also use your own form or field book, but be sure to collect the information listed on the data sheet. After you have collected your data, you can enter it online at <http://www.arrowwoodvt.com/HuntAmph>

Hot Tips!

Safety: Be sure to wear reflective, light colored clothing. Inexpensive flashing warning lights that can be clipped on your clothing are available at hardware and sporting goods stores. Reflective vests are strongly recommended. Hardware stores

also sell reflective tape that can be applied to clothing.

Bright Lights: Dim flashlights can vastly reduce your efficiency at finding and moving amphibians. Some volunteers have learned the hard way that an ordinary flashlight, especially one with waning batteries, might not reveal salamanders until they're, well, upon them. If, on the other hand, you have a bright light, you can clearly see all amphibian movement over a large swath of road and can move quickly and confidently. **Note:** LED lights are not as good as the old incandescents for spotting salamanders. The incandescents have a much more penetrating light

The efficient walk: With a BRIGHT light, stride briskly along your stretch of road, sweeping the light from side to side. Always check the area by your feet when changing direction or resuming activity.

Bring a bucket: Some volunteers collect salamanders in a bucket. This may be helpful if there is heavy traffic and/or high numbers of amphibians. Make sure the bucket is very clean, with no residual soap, detergent or chemicals of any kind.

Keep your feet on the street: Since salamanders are very difficult to see once they're off the road, don't step off the road yourself unless a car is passing.

Clean hands: Make sure your hands have no sunscreen, insect repellent or lotion on them. Salamanders readily absorb chemicals through their skin.

Things to bring on Salamander Night

Get ready in advance!

Things to bring on crossing nights:

- ◆ Rain gear
- ◆ Reflective clothes
- ◆ Bright flashlight
- ◆ Extra batteries

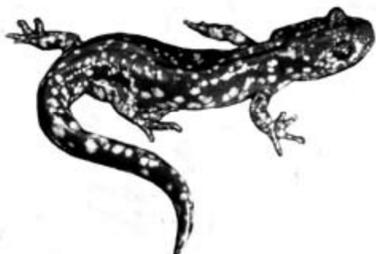
Optional:

- ✓ Camera
- ✓ Spatula for dead amphibians
- ✓ Clean bucket
- ✓ Data sheet and clipboard
- ✓ Crossing signs (with flashing lights)



At the Huntington Conservation Commission web site you will find:

More information on amphibians, Huntington, Vermont hot spots, data collection sheets and more.



Who's Out on Amphibian Nights?

The most common amphibians are:



Spotted Salamander
These chunky salamanders range in length from 6 - 9 inches and are gray to black in color. They have two rows of yellow polka dots.

Jefferson Salamander (not as common)



The Jefferson Salamander has a chunky grayish brown body with costal grooves. They are up to 7 inches in length and have long toes.

Spring Peeper

These frogs are TINY. Look for the dark X mark on their backs.



Wood Frog

Light brown with a dark bandit mask, these 2-inch long frogs are abundant early in the season.



Become a Salamander Crossing Guard Volunteer



Produced by the Huntington Conservation Commission

This is based on a brochure produced by the Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center of West Brattleboro, Vermont. This brochure has been modified by the HCC with their permission.