

Wood Frog
Rana sylvatica



This frog is grayish brown and has a dark mask running through and behind its eyes. Underneath, it is white or cream-colored. Its call sounds something like the sound of a quacking duck.



Wet Area in Early March Near Bench F
Wood Frogs Lay Their Eggs Here Later in Spring

During the winter, a natural “antifreeze” helps Wood Frogs survive in loose leaves, soil, or decaying logs.



Vernal Pond at End of April Near Bench F

Soon after the frost is out, the frogs breed and then the female lays her eggs in clumps of a thousand or more eggs in shallow, fishless ponds in the woods. These are known as vernal ponds.



Wood Frog Eggs Late in April



Wood Frog Eggs – Early May



Wood Frog Eggs Hatching – Early May



Wood Frog Tadpoles – Late May



Wood Frog Tadpoles – Early June



Wood Frog Tadpoles – Late June

Tragedies for the Wood Frogs



Dry Weather – Dried Up Eggs in Early April of One Year

Sometimes the ponds dry up before the tadpoles mature.



Raccoons Eat Wood Frog Eggs
Photo of Raccoon Footprint at Vernal Pond taken in Mid June

Mortality rates are high because many predators eat the eggs and emerging tadpoles. They are part of a food chain. Notice the footprint of predators in this pond.



**Turkeys Eat Wood Frog Eggs or Tadpoles
Photo of Turkey Footprint Taken in Mid June**



Young Wood Frog – Early July

A few young wood frogs survive and become adult frogs. If there is a good habitat for them, they will lay eggs that will become more frogs.

Things to Do and Questions to Think About

- View the video about frogs and toads. Take special note of the sounds and pictures of the Wood Frogs.
- Do further research about vernal ponds. Why have they become less common?
- Why is it important to protect and maintain vernal ponds?
- What kinds of animals other than Wood Frogs live in vernal ponds?
- Why should decaying vegetation not be removed from vernal ponds?
- What would happen to animals higher on the food chain if the creatures in the vernal ponds were not there?

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