



AMPHIBIAN ALERT



Amphibians are a unique class of animals that spend their lives both in water and on land. Some examples of amphibians in the Georgian Bay Biosphere are frogs, salamanders, the American toad, the common mudpuppy, and newts.

English: Frog
 French: La grenouille
 Ojibwe: Omagakii

Amphibians are cold-blooded animals that typically have gills during their *larval* stage (when they hatch from eggs) so they can breathe underwater. They develop lungs for breathing air once on land during their adult stage. Amphibians can be found in forests, meadows, and near ponds, streams, and lakes.

Some of the species we have in this area are the northern leopard frog, spotted salamander, American toad, gray tree frog, and the eastern newt.

1. The Music of Frogs

Frogs usually call in the evening and you can often hear different species. Using this link: www.torontozoo.com/adoptapond/frogs.asp you can listen to the species in this area.

Walk the shore of a lake or wetland at dusk from May to September and you will be treated to a concert by frogs! Spring is the best time to hear a variety of frogs. Did you recognize these sounds while you were out? Try making the different noises to see if a frog responds.

- A. Spring peeper – “peep-peep-peep”
- B. Green frog – an elastic being plucked
- C. Bull frog – “jug-o-rum- jug-o-rum- jug-o-rum”
- D. Leopard frog – rubbing a balloon
- E. American toad – “brrrring... brrrring”



A



B



C



D



E

2. FrogWatch is a program designed to teach people about Ontario’s frogs and toads. Volunteers can help gather information about where frogs are living in our province. Any information you send in will be added to an online map: www.naturewatch.ca/frogwatch



frogwatch
 ENGAGING CITIZENS IN SCIENCE

3. Build a Toad Home

Building Toad Homes is a fun way to invite toads to your home and garden. Toads are an important part of the food chain and will help keep slugs out of your garden. Toads like to burrow into the ground and should always have exposed earth in which to dig.

Materials: an old clay pot or planter, some water, logs, small shovel, and rocks.

1. Find a shady spot adjacent to the garden where they can hunt for prey.
2. Half bury the pot in the dirt and place a rock near the entrance to provide shelter.
3. Dig out a puddle sized area for water to collect to make a small pond.
4. Use the logs and other rocks to border the pond,
5. Decorate with things around your home!



4. Going on a Salamander Search

Some people live or visit Georgian Bay for years without seeing a single salamander! There are many, many salamanders out there, you just have to know when and where to look.

Salamanders eat mostly invertebrates like flies and beetles, which survive on leaves on the ground. Although they typically hide under rocks during the day and hunt at night, some will boldly rest out in the open making them easy to find. Let's look for salamanders!

During the day...

For your daytime Salamander Search, you'll need to look where they sleep. Slowly and carefully lift logs and medium sized rocks to see if there is a salamander below. Be prepared to see other creatures also calling that place home! **Always** put the rock or log carefully back into place and the salamander beside it so it can crawl back underneath. Never put a log or rock back on top of any animal.

At night...

The best nights to find salamanders are rainy, warm, and humid. Searching near wetlands can help improve your odds. If safe to do so, looking on paved surfaces will reveal lots of amphibians at night. You'll need a flashlight and brightly coloured clothes to see and be seen!

Important! There are only two times to pick up an amphibian. The first, when moving a creature to place beside the rock or log you found it under. The second is off a road. Otherwise, remember amphibians are very sensitive to humans' touch. They also don't like loud noises. Keeping quiet, moving carefully and slowly will help you see more salamanders!

Fun Facts!

Salamanders can detach their tails to escape a predator! It will regrow but it takes a lot of energy.

Some salamanders can live to be 20 years old!

