

- Eastern Painted Turtle (*Chrysemys picta picta*): smooth shells with bright and attractive patterns of red, yellow and green on head, limbs and the upper and lower edges of the carapace. The Eastern species is distinguished from the Midland, Western and Southern species by its unique shell pattern and its lack of color on its plastron. Midland Painted Turtles (*Chrysemys picta marginata*) do occur in our area but have a small green blotch in the middle of the plastron.



- Common Snapping Turtle (*Chelydra serpentina serpentina*): a very large (10 – 75 lbs.) and predacious turtle, “snappers” are ugly both in appearance and disposition with a large head, long tail, small plastron and dark brown to black, saw-toothed carapace. Because snappers do not normally bask like other turtle species, their long tail is used to prop it up so it can stick its nostrils out of the water for air.



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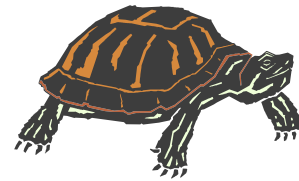


FORT WAYNE
PARKS AND
RECREATION

Play well... Live well

Amphibians & Reptiles*

A Lindenwood Nature Preserve Pocket Field Guide



* This guide only describes those species which are native and have been seen at the preserve in the past.



Amphibians & Reptiles...What's the difference?

Reptiles and Amphibians are cold-blooded animals that from two natural groups depending on life cycle and body plan. “Cold-blooded” means that the animals derive heat from outside sources and must use their surrounding environment to regulate their body temperature.

An amphibian’s body plan consists of moist, glandular skin and clawless toes. Amphibians complete a metamorphous from the aquatic larval stage to the adult form. The word “amphibious” is based on Greek words meaning “living a double life”. The Amphibia Class is comprised of salamanders (including newts), frogs, toads and caecilians (only found in the tropics).

A reptile’s body plan consists of a tough outer layer (scales, shields or plates) and claws on their toes. Young reptiles are miniature replicas of their parents in general appearance if not always in coloration and pattern. The Reptilia Class includes crocodiles and alligators, turtles, lizards, snakes and tortoises.

Lindenwood Amphibians

Frogs: smooth skin, long legs for leaping and webbed toes for swimming; born in the water as a tadpole, frogs usually stay in the water as air-breathing adults (with the exception of treefrogs).

- Bullfrog (*Rana catesbeiana*): our largest frog by far, this species is often seen near water’s edge amidst vegetation where it can hide and wait for prey (the Bullfrog will eat virtually anything that moves and that it can fit in its mouth). When startled, Bullfrogs let out a loud “squeak” as they plop into the water. Bullfrogs in our area have a net-like pattern of brown and green over a plain green



background and large “eardrums” which can indicate the frog’s sex. In males the “eardrum” is larger than the eye and in females it is smaller than the eye. The call of a Bullfrog is a vibrant, sonorous series of bass notes.

- Gray Treefrog (*Hyla versicolor*): not a “true frog” in the sense that it is tree-dwelling and lacks webbed hind toes. The treefrog does, however, have small sticky pads on both the front and hind toes which enable it to climb vertically. Named accordingly, the frog is gray but can also turn shades of green depending on its body temperature. Very well camouflaged, you will more likely hear this species than see it. Their call is a flute-like trill, similar in sound to the call of a red-bellied woodpecker.



- Green Frog (*Rana clamitans melanota*): despite its name, the Green Frog may actually be more brown than green with numerous small, dark brown spots and dorsal ridges running along its sides. Often confused with Bullfrogs, the Green Frog is much smaller; its voice is best described as a rather explosive, single note (or repeated 3 or 4 times) which resembles a loose banjo string.



- Spring Peeper (*Pseudacris crucifer*): another tree-dwelling species although the Spring Peeper climbs seldom and if it does, only on low shrubs and vegetation; varies through shades of yellow, brown, gray or olive with a darker, imperfect “X” marking its back. These tiny frogs are the first ones of the season to start their melodious call for mates. Their call is a high-pitched piping whistle, a singular clear note



repeated at intervals of about a second. A large group of Peepers heard from a distance sounds like sleigh bells.

Toads: warty, thicker skin and short legs for hopping; although toads are born in the water as tadpoles and need at least shallow bodies of water to lay their eggs, they do not dwell in the water as adults. Their mostly land-based territory must be near water so as to keep their skin moist. (It is a myth that touching a toad will give you warts, but their skin-gland secretions are irritating to mucous membranes.)

- American Toad (*Bufo americanus*): brown, gray, olive or brick red, sometimes patterned yellowish and dark brown or black splotches (usually the females). In breeding season (March to July) the smaller male can be seen atop the larger female, grasping onto her and fertilizing her eggs as she extrudes them. The eggs of the American Toad form long, black gelatinous double strands. A quiet amphibian except when startled and during mating season, the American Toad’s mating call sounds like a sharp, high-pitched series of musical trills.



Salamanders: often confused with lizards, salamanders have no scales on their skin and no claws on their toes. These widely-ranged amphibians are born in the water and may or may not stay in the water as adults; some have gills (newts and mudpuppies), some have lungs and others simply breathe through their skin. Whether aquatic or not, all salamanders have extremely sensitive skin and must remain in damp environments. Nocturnal hunters, terrestrial salamanders hide under rocks and logs away from the drying sun during the day. The two “mole salamanders” described below stay underground for most of their lives except for courtship and the depositing of eggs; the one species of “lungless salamander” described below

lacks lungs and respiration is completed through the skin and lining of the mouth.

- Blue-Spotted Salamander (*Ambystoma laterale*): a “mole salamander”; has flecks and spots of white and blue on a bluish black background, similar to the Jefferson (below) except about half the size.
- Jefferson Salamander (*Ambystoma jeffersonianum*): a “mole salamander”; has long toes and snout and a relatively slender build with dark brown or gray skin which is distinctly paler on the sides. Small bluish flecks are often present on the limbs and lower sides of the body.
- Red-backed Salamander (*Plethodon cinereus*): a “lungless salamander”; the preserve’s smallest and most common salamander; two distinct color variations: a) redback – a straight-edged red, orange, yellow or gray stripe down the back from the base of head to tail on a black background; b) leadback – uniformly dark gray to black.



Lindenwood Reptiles

Snakes: a legless reptile, snakes are known for their stealth and speed. Although venomous varieties do occur in Indiana, they are mostly found more south and no venomous species have been seen at Lindenwood. Snakes can often be easily recognized by their scale and color patterns, behavior and general characteristics.

- Eastern Garter Snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis*): due to its appearance in yards and

gardens this species is often called a “garden” snake rather than a “garter” snake; longitudinally striped, the species is named after the fancy garters which were once worn a fashionable way to hold up one’s socks. Although extremely variable in coloration and pattern, garter snakes in our area tend to have three brown, green or yellow stripes (one on each side and one running down the middle of the back) on a black, dark brown, green or olive background. Sometimes the snake may have spots and sometimes it will have both stripes and spots.



- Northern Water Snake (*Nerodia sipedon sipedon*): the only large (24 -42”) water snake in most northern states, this species exhibits many variations; mostly individuals are pale gray to dark brown with reddish brown to black blotches from the neck to the anus which alternate from the back to the sides.



Turtles: the familiar shelled reptile of ponds and lakes, turtles can often be seen basking in the sun on a log or rock near or in its water habitat. Shells are comprised of two parts, the upper carapace and the lower, bottom part, the plastron. Species can often be differentiated merely by the shell’s shape, coloration and pattern.

- Eastern Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*): a species of “special concern” (being closely monitored due to limited abundance or distribution within its native habitat) in Indiana, due to habitat loss, road mortality and collection by humans for sale or use as pets.

