



What



Crossing Guard Volunteers Do

Basic duty. Crossing Guards help facilitate the safe crossing of amphibians at designated sites and participate in data collection.

How will I know when it's "Big Night?"



Between mid-March to late April



Ground thawed



Above 40° F

3 Raining or very wet

If you have volunteered for a particular Crossing Brigade, the Site Coordinator will call you to let you know when the weather is right. You can also call the BEEC Big Night Hotline at 257-5785, or sign up for e-mail alerts at beec@sover.net.

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.

What do I do when I get there? If

there is a Site Coordinator, check in. The Coordinator will provide further instruction. Generally, 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.



Collecting data. Keep a count of the numbers of each amphibian species you find. Dead amphibians need to be counted too, and recorded separately. They also need to be removed from the road so they are not counted again. The coordinators will keep a tally on a data sheet. If you aren't sure what you species you found, the coordinator can help you identify it.



7 Hot Tips!



#1: 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 you're, ahem, upon them. If, on the other hand, you have a bright enough light, you can clearly see all amphibian movement over a large swath of pavement.

Our favorite all-purpose light is a 6 volt light manufactured by Rayovac. This flashlight is moderately priced, has a very bright beam, a convenient carrying handle, and a flashing red light on the back that improves visibility.

Don't wait for the rain to start! Make sure you have a big light for Big Night, and enough bulbs and batteries to keep it bright. You won't be sorry, and the salamanders will thank you .

#2 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. *Note: This only works if you have a BRIGHT light.*

#3 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.



#4 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 forced to for safety.

#5 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.

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



#7 *Watch out!* Some of these amphibians, especially the tiny peepers, can be very hard to see. Always check the area around your feet before you change direction. If your light is dim, take your time. Don't rush to move a salamander unless you can clearly see the path is clear. *Parents, please supervise children closely. We have seen too many amphibians stepped on by kids in a hurry to pick up a salamander.*

Things to bring on "Big Night:"

Get ready in advance!

You will **NEED** these things:

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

Optional:

- ☞ A camera
- ☞ Snacks
- ☞ A spatula for dead amphibians
- ☞ Clean bucket

Questions?

Contact BEEC: 257-5785

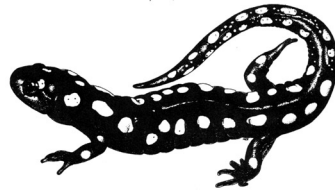
Patti Smith: 387-5384

Your site coordinator: _____

Who's Out on "Big Night?"

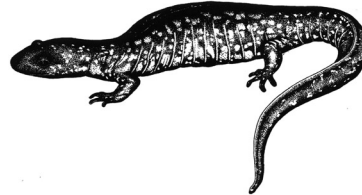
The most common amphibians are:

Spotted Salamander



Adults range in length from 6 - 8" and are gray to black in color. They have two rows of yellow polka dots.

Jefferson Salamander

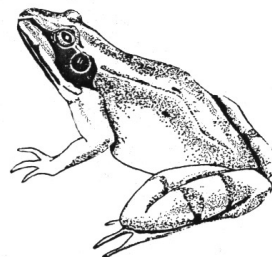


The Jefferson has pale blue flecks on a brown to gray background. The Jeffersons are up to 7" in length.



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 frogs are abundant early in the season.

Salamander Crossing Brigade



Volunteer



P.O. Box 2318, W. Brattleboro, Vermont, 05303
 (802) 257-5785 beec@sover.net www.beec.org

