

Finding a Salamander Site Near You: Road Surveys



Since the major goal of salamander crossing brigades is to reduce the mortality of amphibians that must cross roads, it makes little sense to have volunteers drive long distances to reach crossing sites. If there are no known sites near you, we encourage you to look for sites closer to home.

Watch the weather: If you've signed up for our e-alerts, you will receive an email when conditions seem right for a migration. Bottom line: if the ground has thawed, nighttime temperature is above 40° F, and it's one of the first rainy nights in late March or early April, amphibians are likely to be on the move.

Watch the clock. Go out just after dark, once the amphibians have had a chance to get going. As long as it's raining steadily, the salamanders and frogs will keep moving well into the night, so you can decide for yourself when it's quitting time. **Roads near wetlands are a good place to start.**

Bring a friend. You'll need at least two people to scout safely, one to drive and the other to scan the road for amphibians.

Drive slowly—about 15 mph or slower if amphibians are present, and do not attempt surveys on extremely busy roads, it is too dangerous!

Keep your windows open. The quacking of wood frogs or the peeping of peepers might be the first sign that you're near a breeding pool.

Scan the whole road for amphibians, dead or alive. You will learn to develop the right 'search image.' Salamanders look like sticks, often with one end tipped up. Frogs look like pyramid-shaped pebbles or small stones.

Once you locate a good crossing spot ("good" = multiple casualties and/or live amphibians), pull over to the side of the road. Make sure your car is off the road and easily visible from behind. If possible, don't park directly in front of a house. (This can make homeowners understandably uncomfortable.) If you can, park away from the crossing and walk in to avoid inadvertently squashing amphibians. Be sure to check under your car for critters before you leave.

Fill out the data sheet Be sure to include start & end time, temperature, and weather information. Also, be sure to include a map (handrawn is fine; Google Map is too!) with the crossing site clearly marked. If you are prepared for being on the road (reflective vest, flashlight, raingear), move live animals in the direction they were headed and keep count, by species, on your data sheet. One data sheet per site, please.

Submit an online form found on the [Salamander Crossing Brigades](#) page on BEEC's website, email patti@beec.org, or heck, just give us a call and share what you've found at (802)257-5785.



Adapted from materials developed by our friends at the North Branch Nature Center and the Ashuelot Valley Environmental Observatory at the Harris Center.