



Mole Salamanders

The mole salamanders, from the genus *Ambystoma*, spend their lives as moles do — in dark, underground tunnels. They only venture aboveground on warm, rainy spring nights, congregating in vernal pools for just a brief breeding period before returning to their fossorial lives. Big Night(s) are your best chance for spotting them! They are fairly hefty salamanders with moist, smooth skin and costal grooves pleating their sides.

Spotted Salamander

Ambystoma maculatum

Adults range from 6 - 8" long, and are gray to black in color.

Look for these identifying characteristics:

- two irregular rows of yellow spots — very distinctive!



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Jefferson Salamander

Ambystoma jeffersonianum

Jefferson salamanders have pale blue flecks on brown to gray skin. Adults measure up to 7" long.

Look for these identifying characteristics:

- tiny pale blue flecks, mostly on sides and belly
- long toes
- head widest behind the eyes

Blue-spotted Salamander

Ambystoma laterale

Adults range from 4 - 6" long and sometimes have a brown tinge to their skin. Immature Blue-spotted sometimes migrate with adults. Much less common than spotted or Jefferson salamanders in southwest New Hampshire.

Look for these identifying characteristics:

- pale blue spots and flecks on entire body, including legs and head



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Jefferson/Blue-spotted Complex

Jefferson and Blue-spotted Salamanders frequently hybridize. If you see a blue-flecked salamander, it is likely a hybrid. Unless it is clearly one or the other, record it as a Jefferson/Blue-Spotted Complex. Take photos of all Jefferson and blue-spotted salamanders, if possible.



Other Salamanders

Marbled Salamander

Ambystoma opacum

Marbled salamanders have only been recorded in two towns in New Hampshire in the last twenty years, but they are occasionally found just south of us in Massachusetts. They lay their eggs in the fall, but might be out and about on any rainy night. Adults range from 3½ - 4¼" long.

Look for these identifying characteristics:

- irregular silvery-blue stripes or bands on back
- stout body
- thick tail



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Eastern or Red-Spotted Newt

Notophthalmus viridescens

The newt has two distinct life stages: the juvenile eft and the adult. As efts, they are bright orange to yellow-green with dry, granular skin, and they are terrestrial. Adult newts are olive-green, smooth-skinned, and aquatic. 1½ - 4" long. You're more likely to see efts than adult newts on Big Night(s).

Look for these identifying characteristics:

- row of red spots down each side of back
- black line around each spot
- gold-colored eyes

Redback Salamander

Plethodon cinereus

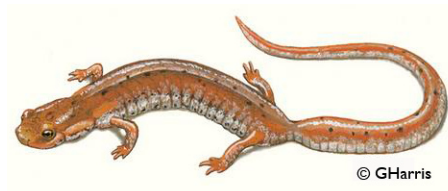
Quite small (2 - 3½" long) and slender, these salamanders can be difficult to see and even more difficult to catch.

Look for these identifying characteristics:

- small legs
- wide red, yellow, or gray stripe down flattened back
- darker stripes at edge of back



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Four-Toed Salamander

Hemidactylium scutatum

These reddish-brown salamanders are also quite small (2 - 3½" long).

Look for these identifying characteristics:

- four toes on each foot, including rear feet
- constriction at the base of the tail
- white belly with black speckles



Frogs Commonly Seen on Big Night(s)

Although wood frogs and spring peepers are our earliest migrants, many other frog species take to the roads on warm, rainy nights. The species here are listed in approximate order of appearance, from early spring through late summer.

Wood Frog

Lithobates sylvaticus

Wood frogs are seen in abundance in early spring. They range from 1 ½ - 3" long, and are brown to reddish-brown in color.

Look for these identifying characteristics:

- dark "bandit mask" around eyes
- prominent dorsolateral ridges running length of back



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Spring Peeper

Pseudacris crucifer

These tree frogs are commonly found at road crossings in early March and April. They are tiny and tan-colored, so look carefully for them.

Look for these identifying characteristics:

- X-shaped marking on back
- adhesive discs on toes
- small size (¾ - 1 ¼" long)
- no dorsolateral ridges or "bandit masks"



© Patrick Coin

American Toad

Bufo americanus

These short-legged, slow-moving hoppers are stout and warty. They tend to be active late in the season, after temperatures have warmed. 2 - 3 ½" long.

Look for these identifying characteristics:

- pairs of dark spots on head and back
- 1 - 2 warts within each dark spot
- large, kidney-shaped parotid gland behind each eye



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Frogs Sometimes Seen on Big Night(s)



Gray Treefrog

Hyla versicolor

These small (1 - 2" long) frogs might be seen on warmer nights, late in the season. Their markings can change in response to light, temperature, and humidity; they are most often light gray, but they can also be green or brown.

Look for these identifying characteristics:

- adhesive discs on toes
- warty texture

Pickerel Frog

Lithobates palustris

Pickerel frogs range from 2 - 3" long, and are far more common than leopard frogs — with which they are commonly confused — in New Hampshire.

Look for these identifying characteristics:

- dark rectangular spots on a tan back
- orange or yellow inside the hind legs and groin



Green Frog

Lithobates clamitans

Green frogs range from 2¼ - 3½" long, and are brown to green in color. Like toads and bullfrogs, they are more likely to be found during late-season migrations or on rainy summer nights.

Look for these identifying characteristics:

- prominent dorsolateral ridges
- green upper lip



Bullfrog

Lithobates catesbeiana

Compared to other frogs, bullfrogs are BIG. Some adults may weigh up to a pound. Adults range from 5 - 8" long, and vary in color from olive green to greenish-brown.

Look for these identifying characteristics:

- no dorsolateral ridges
- folds behind each eye curve over ear drum (like earpieces on glasses)
- green face