

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT

Look for it now in Southwest Ohio!

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Photo credit: Lauren Connelly, www.jlaerialviews.com

Salamanders (*Ambystoma* sp.)

By Lauren Connelly, Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist

We are finally reaching the end of winter, which can only mean one thing--SALAMANDERS! I know, you are probably thinking, "Wait a minute! I know it practically feels like summer to us lately, but it has GOT to be too cold for our ectothermic and amphibian friends because they rely on external sources for their body heat." Actually, late February to early March is the salamander breeding season!

Salamanders will typically move at night, especially during a rainy evening, over the forest floor to find their way to vernal pools or small streams to lay their eggs under rocks. Vernal pools are temporary areas that collect water and will dry up when the weather gets warmer. Both vernal pools and small streams make the perfect environments for salamanders to deposit their eggs because they do not have to worry about predation from fish!

To learn more, visit [Getting to Know Salamanders in Ohio: Life History and Management](https://woodlandstewards.osu.edu/sites/woodlands/files/d6/files/pubfiles/salamander.pdf): <https://woodlandstewards.osu.edu/sites/woodlands/files/d6/files/pubfiles/salamander.pdf>

FUN FACTS

- There are two distinct types of salamanders: "mole type" that live underground up to 7ft and have well developed lungs, and "lungless" that breathe through their skin and have to keep their skin moist.
- Salamanders can drop their tails and even their limbs in order to evade predators. Don't worry, they grow back!
- Amphibians like salamanders and frogs are "indicator species" because of how sensitive they are to their surroundings. How well their populations are doing is a good gauge of how well that environment is doing overall.

Questions? Contact us!

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