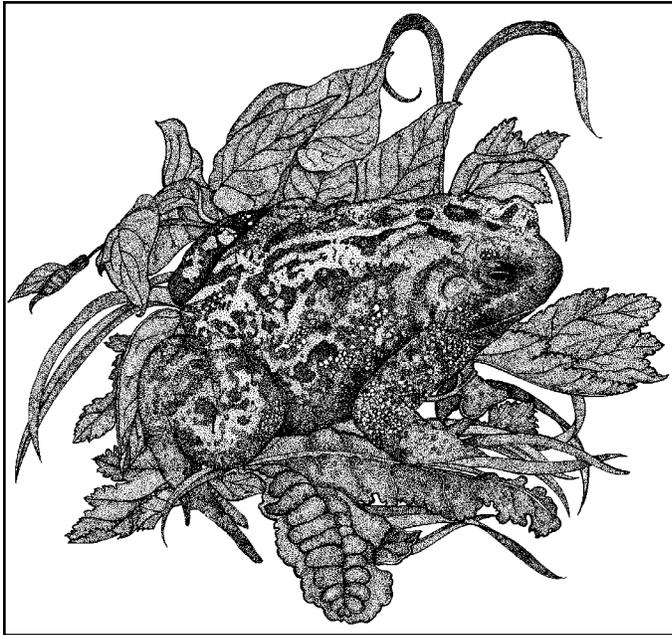
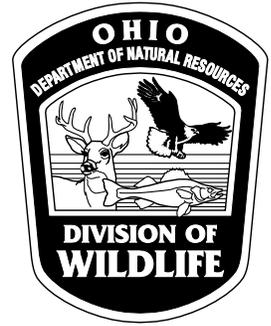


Eastern American Toad

Scientific Name: *Bufo americanus*



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Introduction

The Eastern American toad is found throughout Ohio. Those living near bodies of water may recognize the toad more by its sound than by sight. It has a long, almost musical, trill that many find a familiar sound as dusk falls on a mid-spring or early summer evening.

Toads have another claim to fame that is actually erroneous—touching a toad doesn't result in warts for the handler. However the Eastern American toad does produce secretions from its skin glands that produce irritation in human skin. The secretions serve as a defense mechanism for the toad; the potential irritation reduces the likelihood of the toad being handled by people and produces a bitter taste to the animals that might prey on the toad.

Description

The Eastern American toad is often confused with the Fowler's toad which is similar in appearance. The American toad can be distinguished from the Fowler's by the dark spots found on its back. An American toad has only one, two or three large warts in each of these large dark spots. By contrast, the Fowler's toad generally has more warts on these spots.

Most males are brown, but there is much variation within the species and some males are shades of gray or olive, or brick red. The Eastern American toad may also display patches of yellow or buff. The dark spots on its body are

brown or black and the warts vary from yellow to brown. Female Eastern American toads are larger than the males.

The Eastern American toad can be found from Manitoba, Canada to North Georgia and from as far west as Kansas to the East Coast.

Habitat and Habits

The Eastern American toad requires both land and water habitats; it prefers shallow bodies of water, such as temporary pools, ditches, or shallow portions of streams, for breeding. On land it seeks hiding places under boardwalks, flat stones, logs, wood piles or other similar cover.

The Eastern American toad is nocturnal, meaning it is active at night.

Reproduction and Care of Young

Eastern American toads are polygamous, meaning that the males mate with more than one female. In Ohio, breeding activity reaches its peak in April and May. Eggs, resembling long spiral tubes of jelly, are laid in water. After 3 to 12 days, a small, nearly black tadpole emerges from the egg. Immature Eastern American toads then go through a process known as metamorphosis, where over a period of 50 to 60 days the body transforms in shape and matures, resulting in a change from a limbless,



waterborne tadpole to a four-legged animal capable of living on both land and water.

From the time the eggs are laid, young toads are on their own; they receive no parental care from the male or female adults.

Management Plans

The Division of Wildlife is involved in the management of the Eastern American toad in two significant ways. First, the Division works to acquire and preserve habitat suitable for the Eastern American toad and many other wetland species. This is accomplished by outright purchase of land, working in partnership with private landowners to restore and/or preserve wetland acreage, accepting donations of land from conservation minded landowners, and when necessary monitoring and approving the

mitigation efforts of developers.

Additionally the Division participates in frog and toad surveys conducted in the state and the nation that are used to help monitor populations of these amphibious species.

Viewing Opportunities

One of the easiest species to locate and observe, Eastern American toads can be found in most of the state's wetland areas or shallow ponds. Among the notable wetland areas in the state where American toads might be found are: Big Island Wildlife Area in Marion County, Killdeer Plains Wildlife Area in Wyandot County, Youngstown's Mill Creek Park, and Cooper Hollow Wildlife Area in Jackson County.

Do Something Wild!

The Eastern American toad is among the majority of wildlife species in Ohio that are not hunted. All these animals are vital parts of our overall ecosystem and contribute to the wildlife diversity of the state. Helping us to manage and research these species are the generous citizens of Ohio. With money they either donated through the state income tax checkoff, the purchase of wildlife conservation license plates, or their direct contribution to the Endangered Species Special Account, the Division is able to purchase critical habitat essential to sustaining wildlife diversity in the state and provide educational materials and opportunities on wildlife to children and adults.

Contributions to our Endangered Species and Wildlife Diversity Program are accepted throughout the year. To make a donation, please send a check to: Endangered Species Special Account, Ohio Division of Wildlife, 2045 Morse Road, Bldg. G, Columbus Ohio 43229-6693. All contributions, whether made on your income tax return or directly, are tax deductible.

At a Glance

Mating: Polygamous

Peak of Breeding Activity: April and May

Eggs Hatch: In 3-12 days

Young Hatch: April and May

Number of Eggs: Up to 5,000

Eggs Produced: Once a year

Adult Length: 3-4 inches

Life Expectancy: Unknown

Feeding Periods: Dusk to dawn

Typical Foods: Insects and invertebrates

Native to Ohio: Yes

