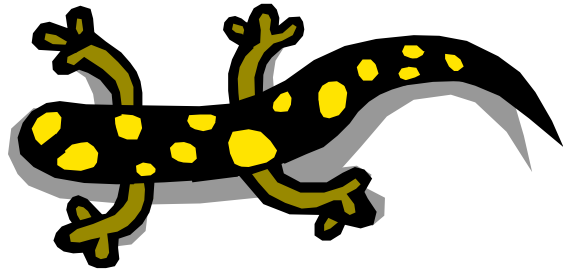


MAINE AUDUBON

VIP Monitoring Program Landowner Fact Sheet



What is the VIP Monitoring Program?

Volunteers from the Maine Audubon Society are collecting data on vernal pools during the Spring and Summer seasons of 2000, 2001, and 2002. Each pool will be visited at least three times per field season. Maine Audubon has asked volunteers to monitor pools on their own properties or to obtain landowner permission to monitor local vernal pools. The project is funded by the Switzer Foundation, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Sweetwater Trust and the Maine Audubon Society in cooperation with the University of Maine, the Maine Outdoor Heritage Program, Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and the Maine State Planning Office. Volunteer and Landowner support is an important element for the study's success.

What are vernal pools and why should we study them?

Vernal Pools are very special habitats, defined as temporary to semi-permanent wetlands, without predatory fish, that provide breeding habitat for fairy shrimp, salamanders, and/or wood frogs. Vernal pools are also used for feeding and resting by a diversity of other animals, such as spring peepers and gray tree frogs. In addition to being vital habitat for local plants and animals, vernal pools are important landscape features. If we think of them as wetland islands in a sea of upland forests, we see that groups of pools form stepping stones of hospitable habitat along which wetland-dependant wildlife may travel.

What is the role of the VIP Monitor?

Data collected by volunteers will help us to better understand natural variability in hydrology, species use, and reproductive potential (including number of egg masses etc.) within and among pools. Volunteers will measure the size and depth of the vernal pool, note the surrounding habitat, obtain or draw maps showing the pool's location, measure water temperature, and check for the presence of indicator species and/or egg masses. Monitors may also measure pH, conductivity, and dissolved oxygen levels. Photos may also be taken. Monitors will record data at least three times during the field season and forward that information to Professor Aram Calhoun, of the University of Maine.

How do landowners extend or cancel permission?

Landowner permission may be renewed for subsequent field seasons or withdrawn by the landowner at any time by notifying Maine Audubon's VIP Monitoring Program (20 Gilsland Farm Rd, Falmouth, ME 04105 Tel: 781-2330 x222 Fax: 781-0974).

Who do I contact for more information?

For more information about the project, contact Maine Audubon Society's Conservation Department (781-2330 x222 or x219).

VIP MONITOR: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____