

## Featured Species—American Toad

The American toad (*Anaxyrus americanus*) is widespread and found from Labrador, the Hudson Bay area, and Manitoba (Canada) south to northern Texas, Louisiana, central Alabama, northern Georgia, and North Carolina. The toad may inhabit a variety of habitats, including forests, mowed grassy yards, and prairies, as long as sufficient moisture and food is present. Breeding may occur from March to July in nearly any slow or standing body of water, including both permanent and temporary pools. Breeding sites generally have few if any fishes. Eggs are laid in long strands (see photo) The call is a musical trill that may last up to 30 seconds in length. Many FrogWatch USA volunteers from Rhode Island, west to Indiana, and south to Virginia were reporting American toads in mid-late April.



Photo: Joe Greathouse, Oglebay's Good Zoo, W. Va.

## Season Snapshot

Colder spring temperatures in the Midwest, Mid-Atlantic, and East Coast resulted in many veteran volunteers reporting delays in when species typically began calling and lower call intensities through March. Activity picked up in April. While not all chapters have submitted the site registration forms and datasheets of new volunteers, we would like to share the following snapshot of who we know is participating in FrogWatch USA this year.

- Number of new monitoring sites registered: 102
- Number of states represented: 25
- Number of FrogWatch USA chapters: 30, in 22 states\*
- Number of training sessions hosted by chapters: >25
- State with the most volunteers who have already submitted their data: Rhode Island, followed by Indiana
- Species most frequently reported east of the Mississippi: Spring peepers
- Species most frequently reported west of the Mississippi: Pacific treefrog

\* See the full list of local chapters at: <http://www.aza.org/become-a-frogwatch-volunteer/>.

## Citizen Science and Conservation

Citizen science (also known as *public participation in scientific research*) programs have long emphasized their role in informal science learning for volunteers and data collection for scientific purposes. More recently, interest has arisen in the role of citizen science in conservation. In April, the Center for Biodiversity and Conservation at the American Museum of Natural History, the National Audubon Society, and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, with support from the National Science Foundation (NSF), hosted a workshop dedicated to exploring this topic. FrogWatch USA was honored to participate in the workshop and will continue to explore how FrogWatch USA may integrate conservation goals and/or apply its findings for conservation outcomes, as appropriate. Read some of the online discussions leading up to the workshop at: <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/citscitoolkit/conference/ppsr2011>.

## Site Registration and Data Submission

Site registration forms and datasheets are available for download at [www.aza.org/current-frogwatch-volunteers/](http://www.aza.org/current-frogwatch-volunteers/). Returning volunteers do not need to submit a new site registration, unless they are adding a new site.

All site registration forms and datasheets should be submitted to FrogWatch USA at the following email or U.S. mail address, unless otherwise instructed by your chapter coordinator. Email: [frogwatch@aza.org](mailto:frogwatch@aza.org)

U.S. mail address:  
FrogWatch USA Coordinator  
Association of Zoos and Aquariums  
8403 Colesville Road, Suite 710  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

When completing your datasheets, report all data, including monitoring visits when no frog or toad calls were heard!

## Tip From a Volunteer—Be Still!

An experienced volunteer noted that FrogWatch USA often reminds people that noise impacts monitoring sessions since talking inhibits you from listening, and external sounds may hide sounds. However, this volunteer noted that movement is very disturbing to frogs and toads and is more likely to alter their calling behavior than sound.

## We Want To Hear From You!

Share your FrogWatch USA experiences, questions, and photos with us and your fellow FrogWatch USA Volunteers, by emailing [frogwatch@aza.org](mailto:frogwatch@aza.org). The newsletter is published throughout the FrogWatch USA season. Previous newsletters are available for download at: [www.aza.org/frogwatch-newsletters/](http://www.aza.org/frogwatch-newsletters/).