

Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

Volunteers keep tabs on Amphibians

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature.

In the depths of winter, it may be a little hard to think ahead to early spring, but soon spring peepers, tiny frogs found across the Eastern United States and among the first frogs to emerge and begin mating, will begin their calling.

The emergence of frogs and toads across North Carolina brings with it the emergence of citizen scientists who venture forth to help biologists track the distribution and well-being of frog and toad populations.

The North Carolina Calling Amphibian Survey Program, or CASP, is a volunteer-based monitoring program administered by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. Across the state there are 175 routes, each with 10 listening stops at least ½ a mile apart. Volunteers adopt a route and drive it once during each of three sampling windows per year. At each stop, the volunteers note the species of frogs they hear, identified by their mating calls, and also note the abundance of each species.

The North Carolina effort is coordinated with the U.S. Geological Survey's North American Amphibian Monitoring Program, which makes the data available to anyone, including scientists who can use it to get an idea of changes in frog and toad distributions and abundances.

Anyone with a willingness to learn the frog and toad calls and drive the route three times a year can become involved by contacting the state coordinator at jeff dot hall at ncwildlife dot org.

For WNCW and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, this is Gary Peeples.