



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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- [National Amphibian Week is May 7-13](#)

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Northern leopard frog along a northwest Iowa wetland. Photo courtesy of the Iowa DNR.

The loud singing from springtime marshes comes from a tiny package, the chorus frog – an inch-long virtuoso common to Iowa. Chorus frogs along with other frogs, toads and salamanders are being recognized during National Amphibian Week, May 7-13.

National Amphibian Week, sponsored by the Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, is a way to increase awareness about amphibians and to celebrate all things amphibian.

These little creatures are an important part of Iowa's wildlife community. They are unique in that they go through metamorphosis from young to adult, and depend on water during their early life stage.

"They can't survive without water so water quality and availability are important," said Stephanie Shepherd, wildlife biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR). "Iowa has a fractured landscape and amphibians can't move long distances so it's important to maintain water on the landscape. The best areas are shallow, marshy, swampy with emergent vegetation and no fish since fish eat the eggs and tadpoles."

Iowa has 17 species of frogs and toads in Iowa; 11 of which are considered in greatest conservation need.

Iowa has five species of salamanders with the eastern tiger salamander being the most common.

Salamanders spend a lot of time in leaf litter and dirt eating worms and insects and are difficult to see due to their secretive nature. They are more often seen during their migration in the spring and in the fall as they move across the landscape.

All salamander species in Iowa are considered in greatest conservation need.

“There are things people can do to benefit amphibians, like take care of their lawn in a natural way versus spraying it with pesticides as insects are a primary food source for all amphibians,” Shepherd said. “They can create or enhance amphibian friendly habitat, create shallow herp friendly ponds, or support natural habitat – like not draining wetlands, and watching out for amphibians crossing the roads. Maybe place a large stick in a window well so frogs and salamanders can crawl out if they fall in.”

The Iowa DNR offers a frog and toad survey class during the late winter to Iowans interested in helping to collect survey data. The DNR has a frog and toad call library on its website

at <https://www.iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Iowas-Wildlife/Volunteer-Wildlife-Monitoring/Frog-and-Toad-Calls>

Information about Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation is available on their website

at <https://parcplace.org/>.