



Driftless Prairies: Native Ecosystems

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Reptile & Amphibian Inventory

Reptile and Amphibian Inventory

To know your reptile & amphibian friends, here are 3 indispensable for knowing which reptiles and amphibians are living in the habitat that you are creating. The management techniques will ensure you maintain a healthy, happy population.

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Reptiles



Some Interesting Reptile Facts:

- Non-venomous snakes have a pointed tail!!
- Snakes do not have eyelids or ear openings
- Wisconsin snakes are usually active between April and October
- Shedding is triggered by growth and scale wear. Their vision is impaired while shedding and can be more irritable during this process.
- Their tongue is their primary means of locating food
- All snakes are carnivores
- After feeding, snakes will “yawn;” this realigns their jawbones.
- Loss of prairie habitat makes maintaining and growing snake populations difficult

Reptiles at Driftless Prairies:

Brown Snake or DeKay’s Snake – *Storeria dekayi*

Bullsnake – *Pituophis melanoleucus*

Common Garter Snake – *Thamnophis sirtalis*

Eastern Plains Garter Snake – *Thamnophis radix*

Western Fox Snake – *Elaphe vulpine*

Milk snake – *Lampropeltis triangulum*

Amphibians



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Some interesting amphibian facts:

- Wisconsin has 12 frog species; all are mostly nocturnal
- Amphibians shed their skin periodically. It is based on season, climate, and food supply. Many eat their shed skins for their nutrients.
- To avoid predation, their best defense is to remain undetected.
- Toads emit a burning sensation and puff up their bodies, making it difficult to swallow.
- They overwinter by producing a glycol-like fluid that allows their body fluid to freeze but not the cells.
- Habitat loss and fragmentation is the cause for population declines.
- Frogs and salamanders are indicators of environmental conditions because their skins are vulnerable to pollutants.
- Amphibs offer a number of benefits, from high-quality food for other “critters” to skin secretions that are

used for medicinal purposes.

Eastern American Toad –*Bufo americanus*

Eastern Gray Treefrog – *Hyla versicolor*

Green Frog – *Rana Clamitans melanota*

Northern Spring Peeper – *Pseudacris crucifer*

Pickerel Frog – *Rana palustris*

Western Chorus Frog – *Pseudacris triseriata*

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