

Eastern American Toad



He showed up at one of our black light photo shoots. Isn't he beautiful!!



A face shot!!



A very young one that hopped across our path in our woods.



Toad poop. When I find this on the driveway, I know a toad will be joining us for the photo shoot!!!

Status: Common

It's easy to differentiate their calls from a frogs because their call is an uninterrupted trill lasting up to 30 seconds. And each male has a different pitch.

Unique to other Wisconsin amphibians, these guys lay their eggs in long strands. These strands can exceed 60 feet in length and contain 15,000 eggs! They don't attach them to underwater vegetation but they prefer to wind them around any

plants that are available. Depending on water temperature, the eggs can hatch in 3-12 days. Toad tadpoles form schools and when it's time for them to move from water to land, they will swarm it by the hundreds. At this time they are only about 1/3" long and upon first glance could be thought to be insects! Although toads start life in the water, but then they can live further from water because their thick skin keeps in body fluids.

A young toad will shed its skin every few weeks whereas an adult sheds 4 times a year. Once their skin is off, which takes about 5 minutes to completely molt, they eat it.

I had a dog once that loved eating toads. It was maddening because her mouth would foam up and she'd get the most disgusted look on her face, but did it stop her??? The reason for this foaming is that toads are very unpalatable. They have glands behind their eyes with slightly poisonous secretions. These are not enough to harm a human but could sting if gotten into our eyes. This is not the cause of warts though; that's a myth.

I don't use any chemicals in gardens because I'm happy to have these guys there. They consume large quantities of insects, slugs, and other critters that damage plants. In the late summer months, we usually have a young toad hanging out at the black light when we're doing insect photo shoots. It's great fun sharing the evening with them.