Dear RAARP Participant,

We had a great reporting year and exciting things are happening in New Hampshire that will benefit our reptile and amphibian populations. Keep up the good work and check out the 2009 summary to see how your reports compared to others.

Remember that photos and exact locations of sightings are extremely important for biologists to verify your reports. If you are unable to take a photograph, note a description of the size, coloration, distinctive patterns or markings, and habitat. This information substantially increases our success in verifying reports. Recordings or descriptions of their calls are also helpful.

WHAT'S NEW??

**Blanding’s and Wood turtles – Genetics study planned – Need assistance with samples**

The NH Fish & Game Dept., along with biologists from Maine, New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts are planning a study to assess the population genetics of Blanding’s turtles across the Northeast. A genetics project with wood turtles is also planned for NH. In anticipation of these projects, we are beginning to collect samples. If you find a dead Blanding’s or Wood turtle (e.g., roadkill), please let us know ASAP ([RAARP@wildlife.nh.gov](mailto:RAARP@wildlife.nh.gov), 603-271-2461) along with the detailed location information. We will store dead specimens at NHFG Headquarters, Concord. We will **NOT** be taking samples from live turtles at this time so please do **not** collect or handle live turtles. (It is illegal to possess Blanding’s, wood, spotted, and Eastern box turtles)

**RAARP coming to Facebook!**

We are in the process of developing a Facebook page for RAARP. The intent of the page will be for NHFG to communicate with RAARP participants regarding updates. It will also be an opportunity for participants to track seasonality of observations (e.g., wood frogs calling in southern NH). The Facebook page will **NOT** be used to report locations of observations. Look for us this Spring!

**Web-based reporting**

NHFG received a grant to develop a web-based reporting program for wildlife observations, including all reptiles and amphibians. We hope that RAARP volunteers like yourself will be able to report your reptile and amphibian sightings via a user friendly web reporting program sometime this Spring. Mapping tools help observers pinpoint observation locations. Photographs can be uploaded as part of your submissions. If you are unable to access the internet, you will still be able to submit records as you have in previous years via hard copy RAARP form or email. Check the NHFG website for updates.
NHFG Snake, Frog, Turtle, and Salamander Pages Available
To assist with identification, NHFG created a web page with information and photographs on snakes, turtles, frogs, and salamanders. Calls of NH frogs can be listened to on this website as well. Also, town distribution maps can be viewed for each species. To find these pages, go to the NHFG website. (http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/Wildlife/Nongame/reptiles_amphibians.htm).

What do we do with your reports?
ALL records get incorporated into a database at NH Fish & Game. These records help biologists determine the distribution of species in New Hampshire. Verified reports of rare species are used for protecting reptiles and amphibians during land-use planning and conservation and help researchers target specific areas to study.

Wildlife Action Plan Implementation under way!
NH completed our first ever Wildlife Action Plan during 2005, which identifies threats and conservation strategies to protect our valuable natural resources. Since the completion of the Wildlife Action Plan, many high priority actions have been initiated. Land has been prioritized for protection, partially based on key reports of wildlife from RAARP participants. Surveys have been initiated for Marbled salamanders, Blanding’s turtles, Hognose snakes, Timber rattlesnakes and Black racers. Check out the latest edition of Wildlines or Wildlife Journal magazines (http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/Wildlife_Journal/WJ_mag.htm; the May/June 2007 featured an article on snakes of NH).

Electronic reports and photographs can be sent via e-mail to: RAARP@wildlife.nh.gov. If submitting reports via email, please make sure that you provide adequate details on your observations (see format on reporting slips). If you don’t have internet access and need additional RAARP forms, contact Rita Boisvert at 603-271-5859.

Attached you will find the 2009 report summary.

It was a GREAT year!!! Thank you for your participation in RAARP and have a great season!

Sincerely,

Michael Marchand
Nongame & Endangered Wildlife Program
2009 Summary Reports

We have entered 607 reports for 2009 so far for a grand total of 8208 records entered since RAARP’s start in 1992. 259 RAARP volunteers submitted at least one record during 2009. GREAT JOB!!!

Previous Years
2008: 708
2007: 547
2006: 611
2005: 404
2004: 414
2003: 210
2002: 195
2001: 114
2000: 156

Summary of 2009 Reports Submitted to NHFG

AMPHIBIANS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frogs/Toads</th>
<th># of Reports</th>
<th>Salamanders</th>
<th># of Reports</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Toad</td>
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<td>Eastern Newt</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fowler’s Toad</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Spotted Salamander</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>Wood Frog</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Blue-Spotted X Jefferson Salamander</td>
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<td>Spring Peeper</td>
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<td>Marbled Salamander</td>
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<td>Gray Treefrog</td>
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<td>2-lined Salamander</td>
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<tr>
<td>Green Frog</td>
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<td>Northern Dusky Salamander</td>
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<td>Bull Frog</td>
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<td>Mink Frog</td>
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<td>Red backed Salamander</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pickerel Frog</td>
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<td>4-Toed Salamander</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern Leopard Frog</td>
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<td>Mudpuppy</td>
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<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
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REPTILES

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<tr>
<th>Turtles</th>
<th># of Reports</th>
<th>Snakes</th>
<th># of Reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blanding’s Turtle</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>Common Garter</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotted Turtle</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Ribbon Snake</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Turtle</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Eastern hognose snake</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Box Turtle</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Milk Snake</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Painted Turtle</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Northern Water snake</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snapping Turtle</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Red-belly snake</td>
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<tr>
<td>Musk Turtle</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Racer</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (non-native):</td>
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<td>Smooth green snake</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red-eared Slider</td>
<td>1 (Dead)</td>
<td>Brown snake</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redbellied turtle</td>
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<td>Ringneck snake</td>
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<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>180</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NOTE: The numbers reported above represent the number of observations REPORTED. These observations have not been validated (especially for species like Fowler’s toad and Leopard frog) and these reports do not necessarily represent distinct populations.*
Targets for 2010

Check town distribution maps on NHFG website and help fill in the gaps.

**Frogs/Toads:**
Only a few Mink frogs were reported during 2009. Mink frogs have a northerly distribution (north of the White Mountains). I encourage our northern NH RAARP volunteers to report this species and if you don’t live up north, it would make a great get-away weekend. Listen for their call in June and early July (sounds like hitting 2 boards together). If you are fortunate to capture one, try to take a good photo!! Mink frogs can look very similar to our more common green frog.

Fowler’s toads can be difficult to verify; try to listen for their distinct calls during spring (calls can be listened to on the NHFG website).

We need verified reports of Leopard frogs; photos are crucial!! Most reports of Leopard frogs turn out to be Pickerel frogs. Focus searches during late summer in floodplains, fields, and agricultural areas along rivers. See the NHFG website for description of species.

Northern Leopard Frog  Pickerel Frog

**Salamanders:**
Jefferson and blue-spotted salamanders – breed in vernal pools in early spring
Four-toed salamanders – Associated with sphagnum wetlands. This species can be difficult to locate.
Marbled salamander - State endangered species; be sure to take a photo if you come across one of these and call NHFG ASAP. Towns most likely: Hollis, Brookline, Milford, Hinsdale
Spring & dusky salamanders – live in/near streams and seeps statewide but not easily viewed unless you are willing to flip some rocks in/near streams.
Mudpuppies – Known from Connecticut River but we need more records to determine distribution.

**Turtles:**
Blanding’s turtle were the top reported species during 2009. This is probably due to a large amount of press regarding the species that generated much interest, but is also probably due to the species large size, and movement patterns which bring it into frequent contact with residential areas and roads.

Keep the reports flowing for Spotted and Wood turtles. Even Musk turtles are underrepresented in RAARP reports.
We’re still searching for our first Eastern Box turtle population! We get occasional reports of individuals but still don’t know of any locations where more than one individual have been observed. Eastern box turtles are difficult to verify because of the number of released pets over the years. If you see one, we need to know immediately (via phone 603-271-3016). We have radio-transmitters ready to go so we can follow any box turtles in hopes of finding more.

Keep a look out for Red-eared sliders and other non-native turtles. Non-native turtles can compete with our native species and potentially introduce diseases. Pet turtles should NEVER be released into the wild.

Snakes:
2009 was the Year of the Milk snake with 55 reports!

Hognose snakes are state endangered and their sandy habitat continues to be developed in southern New Hampshire. To protect this species, we need to document the best places where it still occurs. Photos are critical.

We are initiating a Black racer study this year. Send in your observations ASAP and we might be able to incorporate your data into our study.

Timber rattlesnakes, state endangered, are extremely rare. Only known from one site in NH.

Ribbon snakes and smooth green snake were listed in the NH Wildlife Action Plan as Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Photographs are critical for Ribbon snakes. Check out the NHFG website to help with identification.