

Signs of the Seasons: A Maine Phenology Project

Phenophase Definitions

Spring Peeper, *Pseudacris crucifer*

Directions:

As you report on phenophase status (Y, N, or?) on the datasheets, refer to the definitions on this sheet to find out what you should look for, for each phenophase in each species. For reporting animal abundance, if a specific question is included below the phenophase, choose the best answer to the question. If there is no specific question, enter the number of individual animals you observed in each phenophase.



Figure 1: Adult spring peeper. Image source: J.D. Willson, Savannah River Ecology Lab, <http://srel.uga.edu>

Activity

How many individuals do you see?

Adults on land

One or more adults are seen at rest or active on land.

Adults in water

One or more adults are seen at rest or active in water.

Adults feeding

One or more adults are seen feeding. If possible, record the name of the species or substance being eaten or describe it in the comments field.



Figure 2: Spring peeper. Image source: J.D. Willson, USGS, Savannah River Ecology Lab, <http://srel.uga.edu>

Reproduction

Vocalizing

One or more individuals are heard vocalizing.

What is the intensity of vocalizing?

- **Single calls:** There is a space between calls and individuals can be counted.
- **Overlapping calls:** Calls of individuals can be distinguished but there is some overlapping of calls.
- **Full chorus:** Calls are constant and overlapping.

Audio for Spring Peeper Calls: To hear examples of Spring peeper calls, you can visit the [Missouri Department of Conservation](#).

Mating

A female is seen grasped and held by a male.

How many individuals do you see?

Fresh eggs

Eggs are seen being extruded, an egg mass is seen with jelly not expanded to full size, or embryos that are more or less spherical are seen.

How many egg masses do you see?

NOTE: Spring peeper eggs are very small, and are deposited singly on leaf litter and other underwater substrate, not in large clusters like egg masses of other common frog species. It is important to use caution when looking for the eggs, because they are hard to see, and easily trampled.

Development

Dead adults

One or more dead adults are seen, including those found on roads.

How many individuals do you see?



Figure 3: Typical spring peeper egg mas. Image source: S. Smith, ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center.