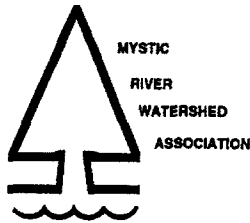


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# Reptiles and Amphibians of the Great Meadows, Lexington, Massachusetts

by John W. Andrews

## Introduction

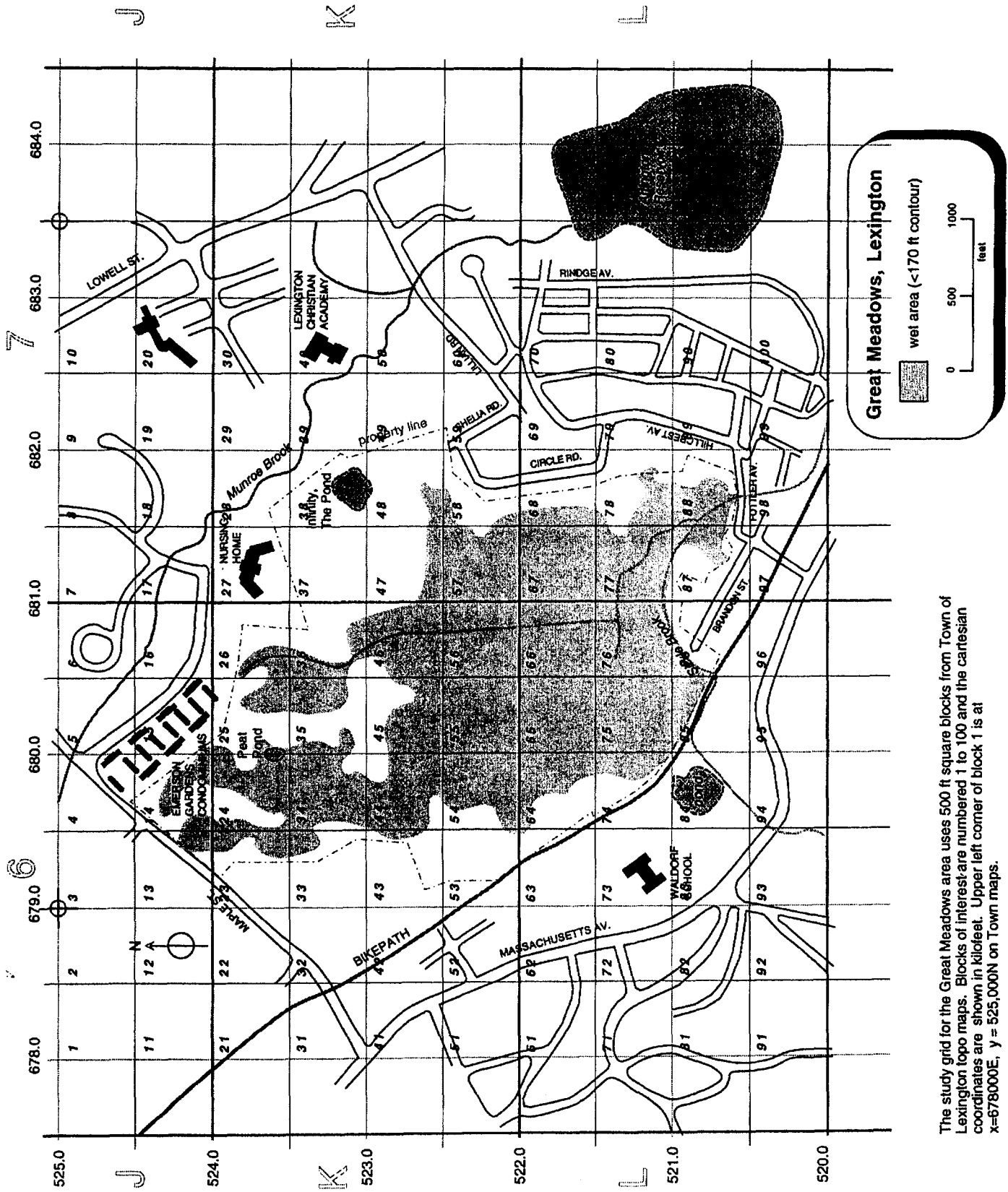
This report contains the results of a survey of the reptiles and amphibians of the Great Meadows area of Lexington, Massachusetts. The survey was undertaken in the spring of 1992 as part of a comprehensive ecological study of the Great Meadows sponsored by the Mystic River Watershed Association.

## Methodology

Approximately seven field trips, each of approximately 2 1/2 hours duration, were undertaken from the last week of March through May 3. Volunteer observers used a variety of techniques to locate species. An attempt was made to verify each species with a photograph or recording of calls. Records have been provided to Massachusetts Audubon Society for inclusion in the statewide Massachusetts Herp Atlas Project. The locations of each occurrence was entered in terms of study block number (see Figure 1). These study blocks are 500-foot quadrats that appear on the Town of Lexington topographic maps. The name "Peeper's Pond" is used for the pond behind the Waldorf School near the Minuteman Bikeway.

## Results

Eight species were confirmed in the study area : 1 salamander, 5 frogs, 1 turtle, and 1 snake. Figure 2 provides a map showing where each species was found to occur. Additional information is provided in the species accounts that follow. In the tables, "BLOCK" refers to the study block quadrat, "REPORTER" is the person who reported the species or who first discovered the species.



The study grid for the Great Meadows area uses 500 ft square blocks from Town of Lexington topo maps. Blocks of interest are numbered 1 to 100 and the cartesian coordinates are shown in kilofeet. Upper left corner of block 1 is at x=678000E, y=525000N on Town maps.

Figure 1

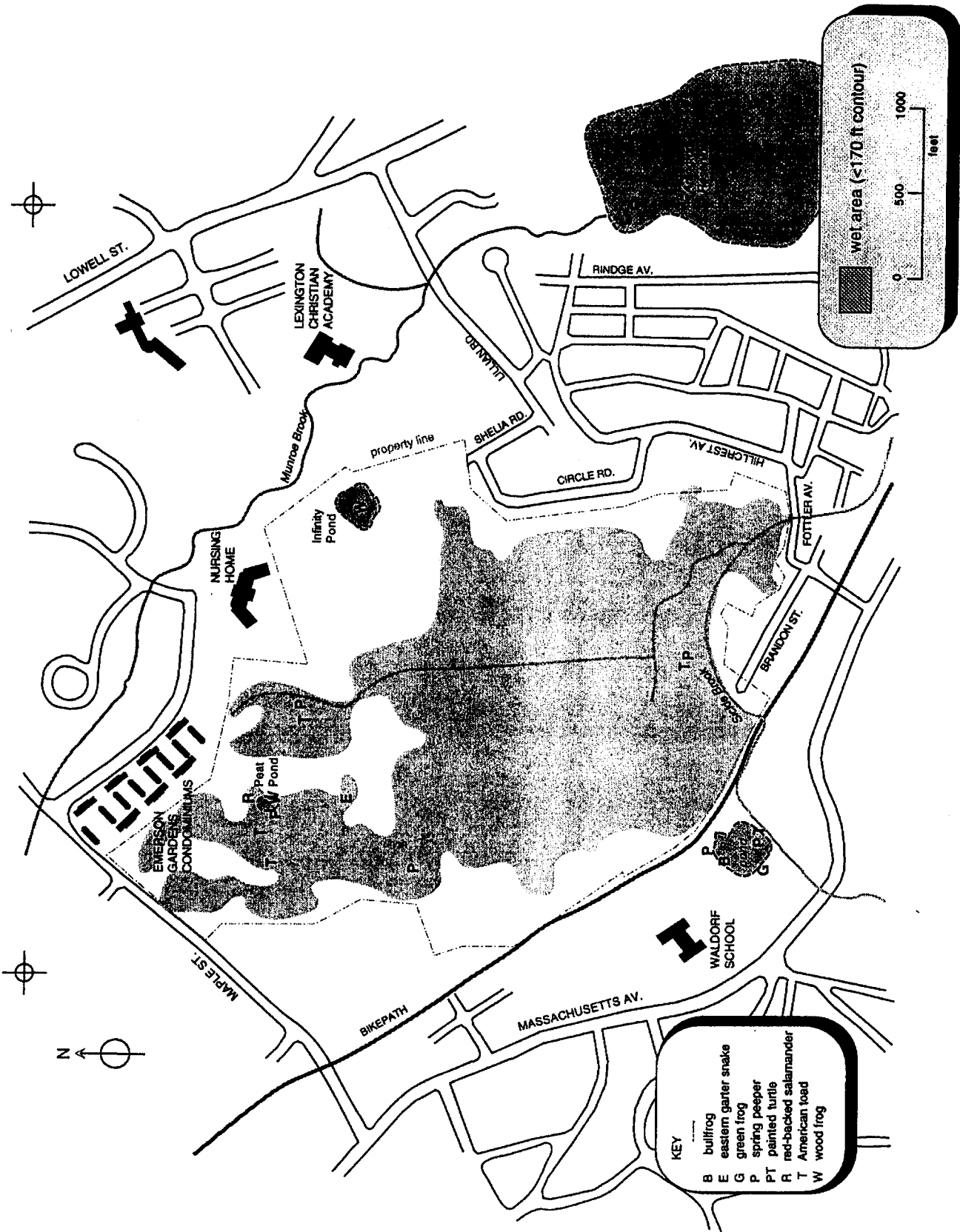


Figure 2 Occurrence of reptiles and amphibians in the Great Meadows.

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

- Redback Salamander, *Plethodon cinereus*.  
In Lexington, this species is local in moist woodlands.

RECORDS

DATE	BLOCK	COUNT	REPORTER	NOTES
5/3/92	24	1	J. Andrews	Leadbacked color variety. Under log near Peat Pond. Photo.

- American toad, *Bufo americanus*  
A widespread species in Lexington.

RECORDS

DATE	BLOCK	COUNT	REPORTER	NOTES
4/11/92	76	1	J. Andrews	Calling from marsh.
5/3/92	24,34,38	6+	J. Andrews	Calling.

- Spring peeper, *Hyla crucifer*  
Breeds in ponds and wetter areas of the marsh.

RECORDS

DATE	BLOCK	COUNT	REPORTER	NOTES
4/11/92	84	9+	J. Andrews	Calling from pond.
4/12/92	36	10+	J. Andrews	From marsh near nursing home. Recording.

- Bullfrog, *Rana catesbeiana*  
A small breeding population is found in Peeper's Pond.

RECORDS

DATE	BLOCK	COUNT	REPORTER	NOTES
4/11/92	84	1	J. Andrews	Adult in Peeper's Pond.
5/2/92	84	2 imm.	M. Andrews	Tadpoles in Peeper's Pond. Photo.

- Green Frog, *Rana clamitans*  
Breeds in good numbers Peeper's Pond.

RECORDS

DATE	BLOCK	COUNT	REPORTER	NOTES
4/11/92	84	1 ad.	D. Lavos, M. Andrews	Adult in Peeper's Pond. Photo.

• Wood Frog, *Rana sylvatica*  
Breeds in Infinity Pond and Peat Pond (the latter site having the greatest population).

DATE	BLOCK	COUNT	RECORDS	
			REPORTER	NOTES
4/4/92	24	6+ ad., egg masses	C. Kochanski, F. Ludwig	Adults calling in Peat Pond.
4/4/92	38	2 ad.	L. Fenn	Adults in Infinity Pond. Photo.

• Eastern painted turtle, *Chrysemys picta*  
Breeds in Peeper's Pond.

DATE	BLOCK	COUNT	RECORDS	
			REPORTER	NOTES
5/2/92	84	27 ad.	G. Brahmer	Adults in Peeper's Pond. Photo.

• Eastern garter snake, *Thamnophis sirtalis*  
Probably widespread throughout the site. This species is quite common in Lexington.

DATE	BLOCK	COUNT	RECORDS	
			REPORTER	NOTES
5/3/92	35	1 ad.	D. Lavos	Adult in burned marsh. Photo.

#### Discussion

The three ponds are clearly critical habitats for Wood Frog, Green Frog, Bullfrog, and Painted Turtle. These ponds are also home to Spring Peepers (although these tiny amphibians can be found in some smaller wet areas as well). Additional survey work is justified, especially in the wet wooded area on the northwestern part of the site.

#### Acknowledgements

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