

# VERNAL POOLS

## IN PENNSYLVANIA

Vernal pools are seasonal depressional wetlands that are covered by water for variable periods, usually from winter to spring. These unusual wetlands range in size from small puddles to shallow lakes. Vernal pools are often overlooked, especially during the dry season, when they seem to disappear, yet they are essential in providing a critical habitat for some animals.

**In Pennsylvania, there are six amphibians and two types of crustaceans that are vernal pool indicator species, meaning that these animals use vernal pools almost exclusively for breeding and larval development.**



Marbled Salamander

*(Ambystoma opacum)*



Spotted Salamander

*(Ambystoma maculatum)*



Jefferson Salamander

*(Ambystoma jeffersonianum)*



Blue-spotted Salamander

*(Ambystoma laterale)*



Wood Frog

*(Lithobates sylvaticus)*



Clam Shrimp

Euroamerican clam shrimp  
*(Limnadia lenticularis)*  
Diversity clam shrimp  
*(Eulimnadia diversa)*



Eastern Spadefoot

*(Scaphiopus holbrooki)*



Fairy Shrimp

*(Eubranchipus spp.)*

Color in the vernal pool. Add frogs, salamanders and egg masses to the pool. What other forest animals would be found in this area? Deer, rodents and birds would also eat and live nearby. Add them too! Take a walk and look for vernal pools in your area!

