

Western Toads of Wake Lake

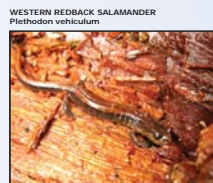
WHY ARE TOADS SO IMPORTANT?

- Amphibian declines are occurring around the world as a result of habitat loss, pollution, ozone depletion, and disease.
- In Canada, both the Western Toad and the Red-legged Frog are listed as species of Special Concern.
- Western Toad breeding sites are rare on Vancouver Island.
- Wake Lake is an important breeding site for Western Toads and Red-legged Frogs, and it needs to be protected.
- Amphibians are "the canary in the coal mine" for the health of wetlands and the surrounding ecosystem.



OTHER AMPHIBIANS AT WAKE LAKE

Surveys have confirmed that eight of the nine native amphibian species found on Vancouver Island use the habitat in and around Wake Lake to meet some of their life history needs. These species include:



Link to BC Frog Watch

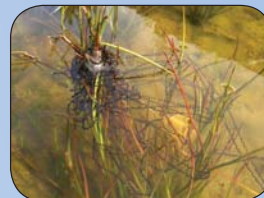
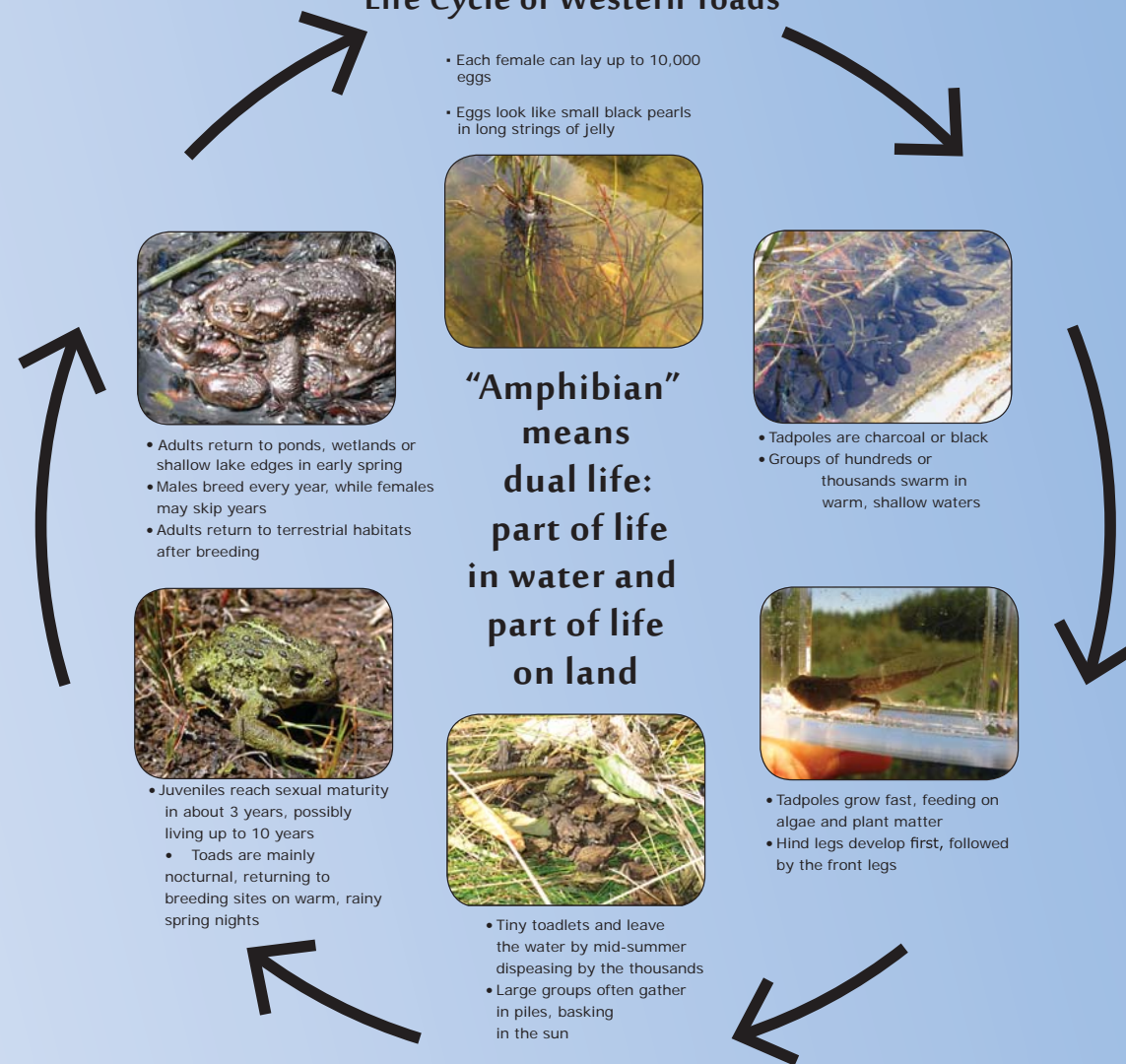


For more information or to report a sighting, visit the BC Frog Watch website: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/frogwatch/>



To watch a 5 minute clip of the Western Toad life cycle visit: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQkK5SqNp10&feature=youtu.be>

Life Cycle of Western Toads



Please Don't Confuse Native, At Risk Toads with Non-native Bullfrogs

WESTERN TOAD
Anaxyrus boreas



- Adults range in size from 6 to 14 cm in body length.
- Toads have short back legs, used mainly for crawling versus hopping.
- Their brown to olive skin appears rough and "warty" and they often have a thin stripe down their back.

AMERICAN BULLFROG
Lithobates catesbeiana



- Adults can reach up to 20cm in body length.
- They have smooth, green to brown coloured skin and a large circle (eardrum) just below and behind the eye.
- Bullfrogs have large back legs for hopping.

Helping the Toads

Throughout the year, Western Toads move in and out of Wake Lake encountering many obstacles such as roads. Often their migrations go unnoticed as the adults' movements tend to be quite dispersed and at night. However, in mid-summer thousands of tiny toadlets can be seen crossing Riverbottom Rd and Banjum Rd as they leave the lake in massive concentrations to surrounding forests. Over 300,000 toadlets were caught and moved across these roads in one summer.



Volunteers installing drift fencing and pitfall traps to help move the toadlets across the road.



Directive fencing to encourage toadlets to cross under the road through an existing culvert.



Migrating toadlets approaching a pitfall trap.



Migrating toadlets moving along the drift fencing instead of out on to the road.

How You Can Help

➤ **AVOID**
Drive an alternate route during periods of migration, early spring and wet fall nights for adults and mid-summer for juveniles.

➤ **WATCH**
Drive with care and watch for toads and other amphibians on the road, especially on warm, rainy nights.

➤ **REPORT**
Report toad breeding sites and road crossing areas to BC Frog Watch.