

## An AMPHIBIAN Checklist for Elk Knob State Park 17 taxa

Herpetology is the branch of zoology dedicated to the study of amphibians (frogs, toads, salamanders, and newts) and of reptiles (snakes, lizards, turtles, and crocodilians). "Herps" are a diverse and interesting group of animals that are important elements in the fabric of life.

Amphibian is derived from the Greek work "amphibios". "Amphi" meaning 'both' and "bio" meaning 'life' - hence leading a double life. Indeed, most amphibians are aquatic as juveniles and breath with gills. After transformation, the adults usually live on land and most have lungs.

Many amphibians are very sensitive to environmental change. Their diversity and abundance can be an indication of an area's ecological health.

In early spring and during the summer listen for the calls of frogs and toads. Salamanders and newts, however, are silent and can be quiet secretive.

Reptiles, unlike amphibians, have dry skin covered with horny scales. Most, with the exception of snakes and legless lizards, have 4 legs with five clawed digits on each foot. While some amphibians retain gills as adults, all reptiles breathe solely by means of lungs.

Look for these cold-blooded animals on warm to hot sunny days when they bask on rocks, logs and tree trunks. Sixty-seven species have been recorded in North Carolina.

**For more information, contact:  
Elk Knob State Park**

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**Notes**

## AMPHIBIAN CHECKLIST Elk Knob State Park



### Seasons:

Spring - March to May  
Summer - June to August  
Fall - September to November  
Winter - December to February

### Web Links

Amphibians and Reptiles of North Carolina State Parks  
<<https://auth1.dpr.ncparks.gov/nrid/public.php>>

### Resources

Snakes of the Southeast  
by Whit Gibbons and Mike Dorcas  
Univ. of Georgia Press  
<<http://www.ugapress.org>>

Amphibians and Reptiles of the Carolinas and Virginia  
by Jeffrey C. Beane, Alvin L. Braswell, Joseph C. Mitchell, and William M. Palmer  
Univ. of North Carolina Press  
<<http://uncpress.unc.edu>>

Reptiles of North Carolina  
by William M. Palmer and Alvin L. Braswell  
Univ. of North Carolina Press  
<<http://uncpress.unc.edu>>

**17 AMPHIBIAN taxa****PLETHODONTIDAE: [11]**

__ Northern Dusky Salamander .....	x	x	-	-
<i>Desmognathus fuscus</i>				
__ Black-bellied Salamander .....	-	x	-	-
<i>Desmognathus quadramaculatus</i>				
__ Carolina Mountain Dusky Salamander .....	-	-	x	-
<i>Desmognathus carolinensis</i>				
__ Blue Ridge Dusky Salamander .....	x	x	x	-
<i>Desmognathus orestes</i>				
__ Blue Ridge Two-lined Salamander .....	x	x	-	-
<i>Eurycea wilderae</i>				
__ Blue Ridge Spring Salamander .....	-	x	-	-
<i>Gyrinophilus porphyriticus danielsi</i>				
__ Eastern Red-backed Salamander .....	-	x	-	-
<i>Plethodon cinereus</i>				
__ Yonahlossee Salamander .....	-	x	-	-
<i>Plethodon yonahlossee</i>				
__ Northern Gray-cheeked Salamander .....	x	x	x	-
<i>Plethodon montanus</i>				

**SALAMANDRIDAE: [1]**

__ Red-spotted (Eastern) Newt .....	-	x	x	-
<i>Notophthalmus viridescens viridescens</i>				

**BUFONIDAE: [1]**

__ Eastern American Toad .....	-	x	-	-
<i>Anaxyrus americanus</i>				

**HYLIDAE: [1]**

__ Spring Peeper .....	-	x	-	-
<i>Pseudacris crucifer</i>				

**RANIDAE: [2]**

__ Pickerel Frog .....	-	x	-	-
<i>Lithobates palustris</i>				
__ Wood Frog .....	-	-	x	-
<i>Lithobates sylvaticus</i>				

**PLETHODONTIDAE: [11]**

__ Seal Salamander .....	-	x	-	-
<i>Desmognathus monticola</i>				
__ Northern Pygmy Salamander .....	x	x	-	-
<i>Desmognathus organi</i>				
__ Weller's Salamander .....	-	x	-	-
<i>Plethodon welleri</i>				