

# Amphibians

Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area is home to at least nine species of amphibians. Additional species may occur at the Bottoms but have not yet been observed.

The name "amphibian" comes from the Greek root words "amphi" meaning "both" and "bios" meaning "life", which refers to all amphibians' lifestyles of living both in water and on land. While some amphibians can live away from water (terrestrial), they require water (aquatic) for at least part of their life cycle.

All Kansas amphibians deposit eggs in water, which hatch into aquatic larvae. Toad and frog larvae are called tadpoles, salamanders are referred to as larva. Some salamander larvae can remain in that stage for their entire lives, but most larvae (including tadpoles) eventually metamorphose (change) into adults.

Adult frogs and salamanders tend to stay near water and have very thin, moist skin, while toads, with thicker, dry skin, can venture further from water. Frogs and toads can be distinguished by their calls, and can be heard in the wetlands, especially immediately after spring and summer rains. Amphibians eat aquatic and terrestrial insects, tadpoles, fish, frogs and toads. Amphibians also are important food items for wading birds, raptors, reptiles, and some mammals, such as Virginia opossums, striped skunks, mink and raccoons.

## FROGS & TOADS

### Great Plains Toad

*Anaxyrus cognatus*

### Woodhouse's Toad

*Anaxyrus woodhousii*

### Blanchard's Cricket Frog

*Acris blanchardi*

### Boreal Chorus Frog

*Pseudacris maculata*

### Western Narrow-mouthed Toad

*Gastrophryne olivacea*

### Plains Leopard Frog

*Lithobates blairi*

### American Bullfrog

*Lithobates catesbeianus*

### Plains Spadefoot

*Spea bombifrons*

## SALAMANDERS

### Western Tiger Salamander

*Ambystoma mavortium*

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# CHEYENNE BOTTOMS



WESTERN TIGER SALAMANDER

# Reptiles, Turtles & Amphibians



PLAINS LEOPARD FROG



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# Turtles & Reptiles

Twenty-four species of turtles and reptiles (lizards and snakes) have been observed at Cheyenne Bottoms; however, due to their secretive lifestyles, several other species found in nearby areas may also be present at the Bottoms. Turtles and reptiles tend to be more terrestrial than amphibians, but all reptiles can swim and most of the turtle species are aquatic.

All turtles, lizards and many species of snakes, such as Gophersnakes and North American Racers - lay eggs, while others such as gartersnakes and watersnakes give live birth.

Reptiles and turtles can often be found basking in the sun on the water's edge during the day or on roads at night.

Cheyenne Bottoms is home to a healthy population of venomous Western Massasauga rattlesnakes. While they can be observed with caution, extra care should be taken if walking in grassy areas around the wetlands.

The diets of turtles and reptiles include aquatic plants, insects, crayfish, fish, amphibians, snakes, turtles, bird eggs, small birds and small mammals. Some snakes may be important predators of ground nesting birds. Reptiles are preyed on by wading birds, raptors and raccoons.

## LIZARDS

### Prairie Lizard

*Sceloporus consobrinus*

### Great Plains Skink

*Plestiodon obsoletus*

### Six-lined Racerunner

*Aspidoscelis sexlineata*



SIX-LINED RACERUNNER

## SNAKES

### North American Racer

*Coluber constrictor*

### Prairie Kingsnake

*Lampropeltis calligaster*

### Speckled Kingsnake

*Lampropeltis holbrooki*

### Gophersnake (Bullsnake)

*Pituophis catenifer*

### Prairie Rattlesnake

*Crotalus viridis*

### Western Massasauga

*Sistrurus tergeminus*

### Ring-necked Snake

*Diadophis punctatus*

### Plains Hog-nosed Snake

*Heterodon nasicus*

### Diamond-backed Watersnake

*Nerodia rhombifer*

### Common Watersnake

*Nerodia sipedon*

### Graham's Crayfish Snake

*Regina grahamii*

### DeKay's Brownsnake

*Storeria dekayi*

### Plains Gartersnake

*Thamnophis radix*

### Common Gartersnake

*Thamnophis sirtalis*

### Lined Snake

*Tropidoclonion lineatum*

## TURTLES

### Snapping Turtle

*Chelydra serpentina*

### Painted Turtle

*Chrysemys picta*

### Ornate Box Turtle

*Terrapene ornata*

### Pond Slider

*Trachemys scripta*

### Yellow Mud Turtle

*Kinosternon flavescens*

### Spiny Softshell

*Apalone spinifera*



PAINTED TURTLE