

SPRING 2020

VERNAL POOL ADVENTURES



Exploring Vernal Pools

Vernal pools are prolific during the spring when the rain is plentiful and the snow has begun to melt. As our water table rises, these small pockets of water seem to come out of nowhere. They can form near ponds, in depressions in the forest floor, on dirt roads and even in a low-lying area of your lawn. While it may appear that these pools are just full of wet leaves and mud, what lies beneath the surface is a world of tiny creatures. Some of these creatures live their entire lifecycle in these temporary habitats. Join Julie Goldberg from White Pine Programs on a virtual adventure and then take this guide with you into the woods to see what you can discover!



Virtual Vernal Pool Links

IS THAT A PUDDLE OR A VERNAL POOL?

[HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/416013999](https://vimeo.com/416013999)

INTO THE FOREST...

[HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/416013999](https://vimeo.com/416013999)

JULIE'S FAVORITE DISCOVERY

[HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/415959226](https://vimeo.com/415959226)

UNTIL NEXT TIME

[HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/416311910](https://vimeo.com/416311910)

Preparing for A Vernal Pool Adventure

Here's our list of favorite things to bring when going vernal pooling:

- Field guides
- Binoculars
- Glass or see-through jar
- Magnifying glass
- Small bucket
- Journal & pencil
- Tall waterproof boots
- Handy-wipes
- Butterfly net
- Snacks (of course!)



Vernal pooling is a wonderful activity to do with the whole family. Here are some other things to keep in mind when you start exploring pools:

HAZARDS

- Know the depth of the water
- Keep your eyes out for poisonous plants found in the forest such as poison ivy and false hellebore
- Always do a thorough tick check when you get home, even if the temperature is below freezing.



Poison Ivy



False Hellebore

IS THAT A VERNAL POOL?

Take this true or false quiz to test your ID skills!

1. The pool is the same depth all the way around. T/F?
2. There are fish. T/F?
3. There are salamanders T/F?
4. A pond is the same as a vernal pool. T/F?
5. Vernal pools only have water in the summer. T/F?
6. A vernal pool does not connect to a spring. T/F?

Answer key on following page!



HANDLING VERNAL POOL CREATURES

- Always make your hands “froggy” (dirty and moist) before touching amphibians. See photo below.
- Never handle amphibians if your hands have residue of bug spray, strong soaps or lotions. This can make them very sick.



Additional Vernal Pool Resources

At White Pine, we love using lots of tools in tracking. Here are a few of our favorite books and websites for more information.

- UMaine video about vernal pools. [Click here.](#)
- [The Animals of Vernal Pools](#) by Leo P. Kenney & Matthew R. Burne
- Maine Audubon's flyer on preserving vernal pools. [Click here.](#)
- Identifying and Documenting Vernal Pools in New Hampshire, published by NH Fish & Game, [Click here.](#)
- [Vernal Pools Natural History & Conservation](#) by Elizabeth A. Colburn
- UNH Extension's page about animals found in vernal pools. [Click here.](#)

Answer Key: 1. F 2. F 3. T 4. F 5. F 6. T

Vernal Pool Activities

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