

PENNSYLVANIA VERNAL POOL REGISTRY

REGISTER A VERNAL POOL INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: ENTER THE OBSERVER INFORMATION

Anyone who wishes to register a vernal pool must fill in the observer information so that we know who collected the data and can contact the observers if we have any questions.

Required fields include:

- The primary observer's name - the primary observer is usually the person who will submit the form.
- A phone number where the primary observer can be reached
- A mailing address

Use the 'Observer Comments' column to tell us anything additional about yourself such as your particular natural history interests or previous experience with vernal pools.

STEP 2: ENTER THE LANDOWNER INFORMATION

If you do not own the property where a vernal pool is located, you will need to obtain the landowner's contact information and their permission to visit their property. Any information collected without the landowner's permission cannot be accepted in the vernal pool registry. If the landowner fields are left blank on the registry form, we will not be able to register the pool. When you approach a landowner, feel free to show them the [vernal pool project brochure](#). This describes the project and will help you explain the purpose of your visit.

If the site is on public land, you still need to talk to the land manager and tell them about what you are planning to do. They may be able to help you gain easier access to the vernal pool, assist with your field visit, or help you find additional pools to register.

If you need help identifying the private or public landowner, please contact us and we will assist you.

STEP 3: PROVIDE MAPS AND DIRECTIONS

Directions to the Vernal Pool: Give detailed written directions to the seasonal pool from two locations. Choose known locations or landmarks, like a town, a large water body, or an intersection of two roads. Your starting points should be major enough to be found on most maps. Report distances 'as the crow flies'. To do this, measure the distance in a straight line directly from each landmark to the pool location, then estimate the direction in 1/16 increments of the compass (N, NNE, NE, ENE, E, ESE, SE, SSE, S, SSW, SW, WSW, W, WNW, NW, NNW).

Example: Frog Pond is 1.6 miles SSE of the intersection of Rt. 30 and Black Gap Road, and 0.9 miles W of the town of Black Gap.

Map of the Seasonal Pool: Please provide map with the location of the seasonal pool clearly indicated with a point. Maps can also be created by making a photocopy of a USGS topomap, a road map, or a tax map. A hand-drawn map with sufficient detail including distances between map features is also acceptable. If possible provide a '**Landscape Scale Map**' that gives an overall view of where the pool is located on the landscape in relation to nearby landmarks. Then provide a second '**Seasonal Pool Map**' which shows details of the actual location of the pool.

GPS Points: GPS units are an excellent way to map the pool location. If you use a GPS unit to record the pool location, please note what coordinate system and datum system was used to record the latitude and longitude. If you use Google Maps satellite view (<http://maps.google.com/>), you can navigate to the vernal pool, right-mouse click over the location, select 'What's Here?', and the latitude/longitude will be displayed. For a different set of imagery, try Bing map's Bird's eye view (<http://www.bing.com/maps>). You can likewise navigate to the pool, right-mouse click over the location, and the coordinates will be displayed in a little window.

STEP 4: PROVIDE SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE THAT WETLAND IS SEASONAL

Choose from one of three options to demonstrate that a wetland is a vernal pool rather than a permanent wetland like a lake or pond (adapted from Kenney and Burne 2000).

OPTION 1: INDICATOR SPECIES METHOD: TWO REQUIRED ITEMS

Required Item 1: Submit a photograph of the vernal pool holding water.

Required Item 2: Submit evidence (photo, video, or audiotape) of breeding activities of at least ONE of the vernal pool indicator animals: Wood Frogs, Spadefoot Toads, Spotted Salamanders, Jefferson Salamanders, or Marbled Salamanders. Evidence of breeding includes the presence of spermatophores, egg masses, and/or larvae, or adult activities such as singing, courting, and/or amplexus. Or, submit a photo or video of Fairy Shrimp. Only their presence needs to be documented.

OPTION 2: FACULTATIVE SPECIES METHOD: FOUR REQUIRED ITEMS

Required Items 1 & 2: Submit two photographs or video images of the vernal pool.

Photo 1: A photo or video of the pool filled with water

Photo 2: A photo or video of the pool dried up.

Required Items 3 & 4: Provide evidence (photo, video, or audio tape) of any TWO vernal pool facultative species from list A and/or B. These can be two species from the same

category (two from list A or two from list B) or one species from each category (one from list A and one from list B).

If you pick an animal from list A, you must document breeding activities. Evidence of breeding includes the presence of spermatophores, egg masses and/or larvae, or adult activities such as singing, courting, and/or amplexus. If you pick an animal from list B, you just need to document presence.

LIST A. Breeding activities of these vernal pool facultative species:
Spring Peepers, Gray Treefrogs, Green Frogs, Leopard Frogs, Pickerel Frogs, American Toads, Fowler's Toads, or Four-toed Salamanders

LIST B. Presence of these vernal pool facultative species:
Red-spotted Newt Adults, Spotted Turtles, Wood Turtles, Painted Turtles, Snapping Turtles, Predaceous Diving Beetle Larvae, Water Scorpions, Dragonfly Nymphs, Damselfly Nymphs, Dobsonfly Larvae, Whirligig Beetle Larvae, Caddisfly Larvae, Leeches, Fingernail Clams, Amphibious Snails

OPTION 3: DRY POOL METHOD: TWO REQUIRED ITEMS

Required Item 1: Submit a photograph of a dry vernal pool.

Required Item 2: Submit evidence (photograph or specimens) from the dried pool bed of any ONE of the following: shells of fingernail clams, shells of amphibious air-breathing snails, cases of caddisfly larvae, exuvia (shed exoskeleton) of dragonflies, exuvia (shed exoskeleton) of damselflies.

STEP 5: DESCRIBE OTHER OBSERVATIONS

Attach a sheet with additional observations and descriptions of the seasonal pool habitat (pool size, amount of vegetation, proximity to road, etc); this is appreciated but not required to register a pool. Label photographs and recordings with your name, date, and location. Send your documentation via mail or email using the contact information listed below.

STEP 6: COMPLETE TIME LOG

Please record how much time you spent total on all aspects of registering the pool, including field surveys and paperwork.

SUBMIT YOUR DATA TO:

Vernal Pool Coordinator
Western PA Conservancy
PA Natural Heritage Program
PO Box 8552 | Harrisburg, PA 17105-8552
Fax: 717-787-9067
spcoordinator@paconserve.org