

# American Toad



GARDEN EARTH  
NATURALIST  

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ECO-SERVICE CARDS

# AMERICAN TOAD

## IDENTIFICATION CLUES

- ◆ up to 4.5 inches long
- ◆ vary in color, olive, reddish or brown; can have spots and/or a light stripe down the back
- ◆ skin covered with warts
- ◆ male has a throat pouch called a 'dewlap' used for singing



### Where to Look

American toad is the most commonly seen toad in North America. They can be seen just about anywhere there is water or moisture, especially in the spring and fall.

### What It Eats.

Tadpoles feed on aquatic plants. The toads eat insects, spiders, worms, snails and slugs.



### Life Cycle

The male attracts a female in the spring with his call. Mating occurs in the water. The female lays a long chain of thousands of eggs which are attached to plants. Tadpoles emerge from the eggs and develop into small toads which leave the water and live on land.

### Who Eats It?

Snakes, raccoons, owls and hawks will prey on American toads. The tadpoles and eggs are eaten by fish.

### Role in the Ecosystem

Toads help control insect populations. They are also an important food source for many organisms.



### Did You Know

American toads can live up to 30 years. They defend themselves from predators by emitting a foul-smelling toxic chemical. They also play dead and can puff up their bodies.