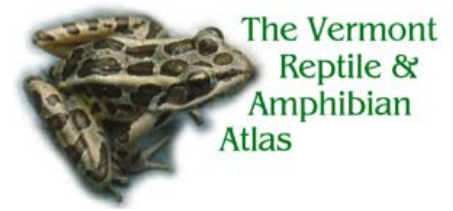


From: Jim Andrews
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Re: **Annual report on the Vermont Reptile and Amphibian Atlas in 2014**

Date: February 2, 2015

New Records gathered by or contributed to the Atlas Project 2014

During 2014, we entered ~2,500 new and verified records of Vermont's reptiles and amphibians into our database. These records represent every county in Vermont and 184 Vermont towns, gores, and cities. Over 480 volunteers contributed reports this year. These reports included 40 reports of S1 (very rare) species, 68 S2 (rare) species, and 170 S3 (unusual) species.

There were six newly entered reports of **North American Racer** (*Coluber constrictor*). Four are historic reports but two of these are current. These two are the first documented reports of this species since 2008. Both of these reports are from historic habitat and one is from a site where artificial dens and acres of new habitat have been created for them. A new nesting site in Chittenden County for **Spiny Softshells** (*Apalone spinifera*) is also an important find. The three new reports of **Five-lined Skink** (*Plestiodon fasciatus*) are all from previously known areas for this species as are the single report of **Spotted Turtle** (*Clemmys guttata*), and the 19 reports of **Timber Rattlesnakes** (*Crotalus horridus*). Some of the historic reports for **North American Racers** are from previously unreported sites but from within previously reported towns and a couple reports of **Timber Rattlesnake**, though from known towns, are at the extremes of their travel distances from known dens.

Two S1 species were not reported. One is the **Fowler's Toad** (*Anaxyrus americanus*). Although we did not add a report of this species this year, we are holding one report while we wait for official release of the data. It is an exciting report of calling **Fowler's Toads** from along the Connecticut River. Sadly, **Boreal Chorus Frog** (*Pseudacris maculata*) has not been reported for the last 15 years (since 1999).

We gathered reports of two hypothetical species this year. We received a report and photo of a juvenile **Eastern Hog-nosed Snake** (*Heterodon platirhinos*) from Chittenden County. We have only two previous photographic reports from the state. Both of the previous photos were taken in Windham County. The new report is in appropriate habitat, but the fact that it is nowhere near any known previous sites makes me suspect it was a released pet or perhaps the offspring of a released pet. However, we don't know that for sure. The second hypothetical species reported is the **Eastern Box Turtle** (*Terrapene carolina*). A report from Orange County is the first from that county. That makes it more likely to be a released pet than a native; however a report from Windham County is part of a cluster of reports from towns in that area that strongly suggest a native population.

Highlights of the 2014 S2 sightings include reports of **Four-toed Salamanders** (*Hemidactylium scutatum*) from two new sites in Castleton. Also the known range of the Connecticut River population of **Mudpuppies** (*Necturus maculosus*) has now been extended north to Waterford with a report from Pulson's Cove in NH. The nearest report was previously three towns to the south in Orange County. It is heartening that the **Eastern Ratsnakes** (*Pantherophis alleghaniensis*) from the northern Addison County population are still being seen. **Eastern Ribbonsnakes** (*Thamnophis sauritus*) were found at three new sites in Rutland County. They have been found in the same towns previously but the new site information is very useful. Locating eight **Eastern Ribbonsnakes** on the same day and at the same site in one of those towns is reassuring. The new egg-laying location for the **Eastern Musk Turtle** (*Sternotherus odoratus*) in Chittenden County was also a significant find.

We filled in lots of distribution gaps this summer. With a small team of volunteers, I (Jim Andrews) visited the towns (plus cities, gores, and grants) in need of the most photo records (>14). This included Avery's Gore, Craftsbury, Derby, Granby, Irasburg, Mt. Holly, Sharon, St. Albans City, Stockbridge, and Warner's Grant. Now we no longer have any towns in need of more than 14 photo records of common species.

One exotic was reported this year. It was a **Green Anole** (*Anolis carolinensis*) photographed in Waterbury. This species has been reported before in Vermont and almost assuredly came in on plants from the south. It is not likely that it will survive its first winter.

Funding in 2014 was provided by the VT Monitoring Cooperative, VT Fish and Wildlife, and the Lintilhac Foundation.

Thanks again for your help.