

Brief introduction to Vermont's herps

Why are herps unique?

H.230



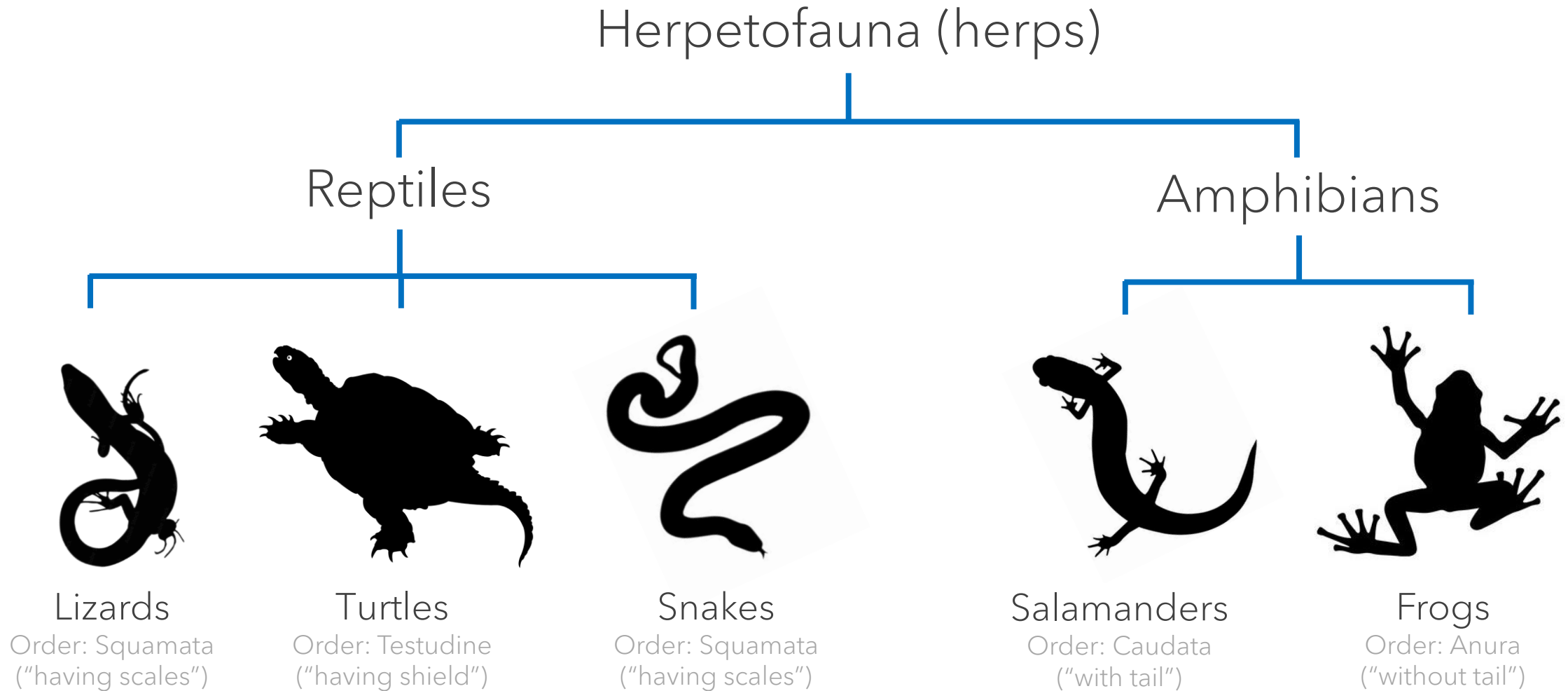
Four-toed Salamander

## Presentation Overview

Luke Groff, herpetologist  
Vermont Fish and Wildlife



# What's a Herp?



# Vermont's Native Herps

## 19 reptiles

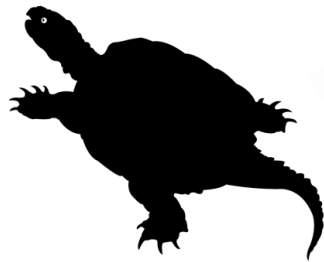
3 endangered species

3 threatened species

4 species of special concern



1 lizard



7 turtles



11 snakes

## 21 amphibians

2 endangered species

4 species of special concern



10 salamanders



11 frogs

# Endangered Species



Fowler's Toad



Boreal Chorus Frog



Spotted Turtle



Common Five-lined  
Skink



Timber Rattlesnake

# Threatened Species



Spiny Softshell



North American Racer



Eastern Ratsnake



# Why Are Herps Unique?

## Unique characteristics

- Ectothermic, adaptations
- Delayed sexual maturity
- Low reproductive output
- Irregular birthing frequencies
- High egg, larvae, juvenile mortality
- Slow moving, low mobility
- Specific habitat requirements
- Long lifespans
- Threats ...

## Potential Consequences

- Small populations
- Age and sex-skewed populations
- High mortality from roads, agriculture
- Patchy distributions
- Limited population exchange
- Population declines and extirpation ...

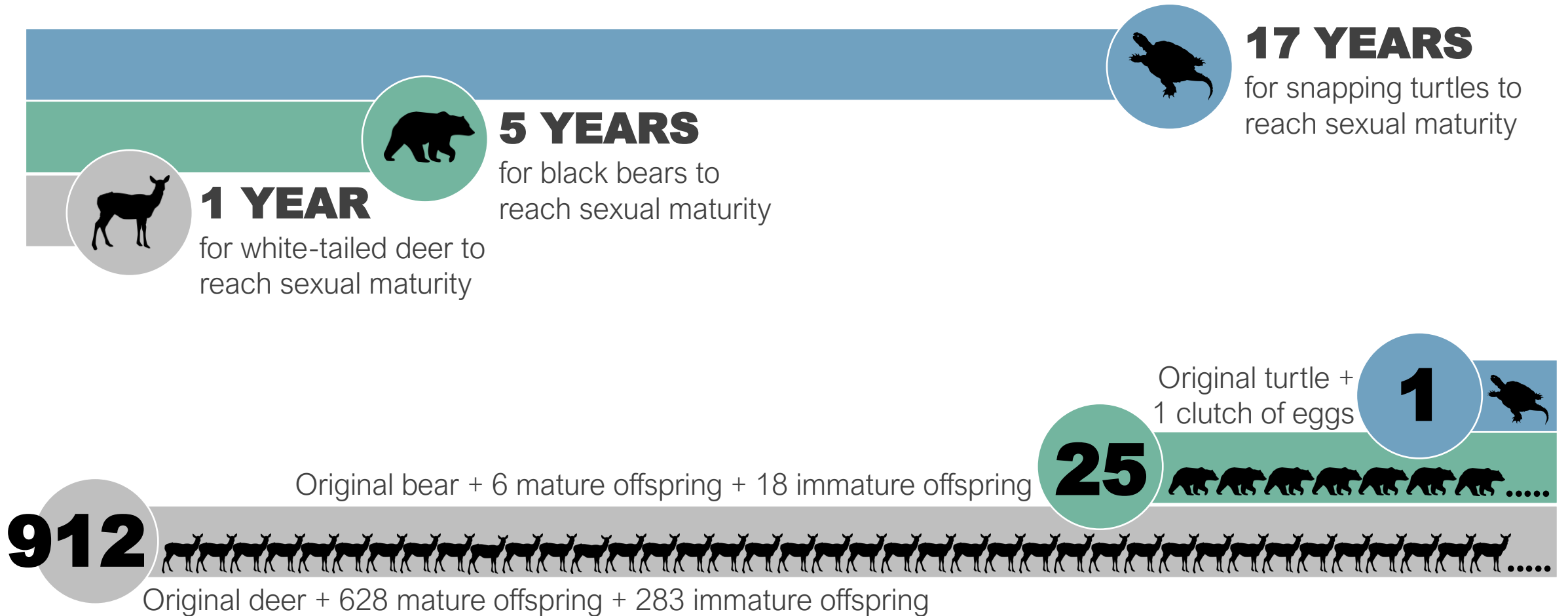


Smooth Greensnake

# Comparison of Reproductive Potential



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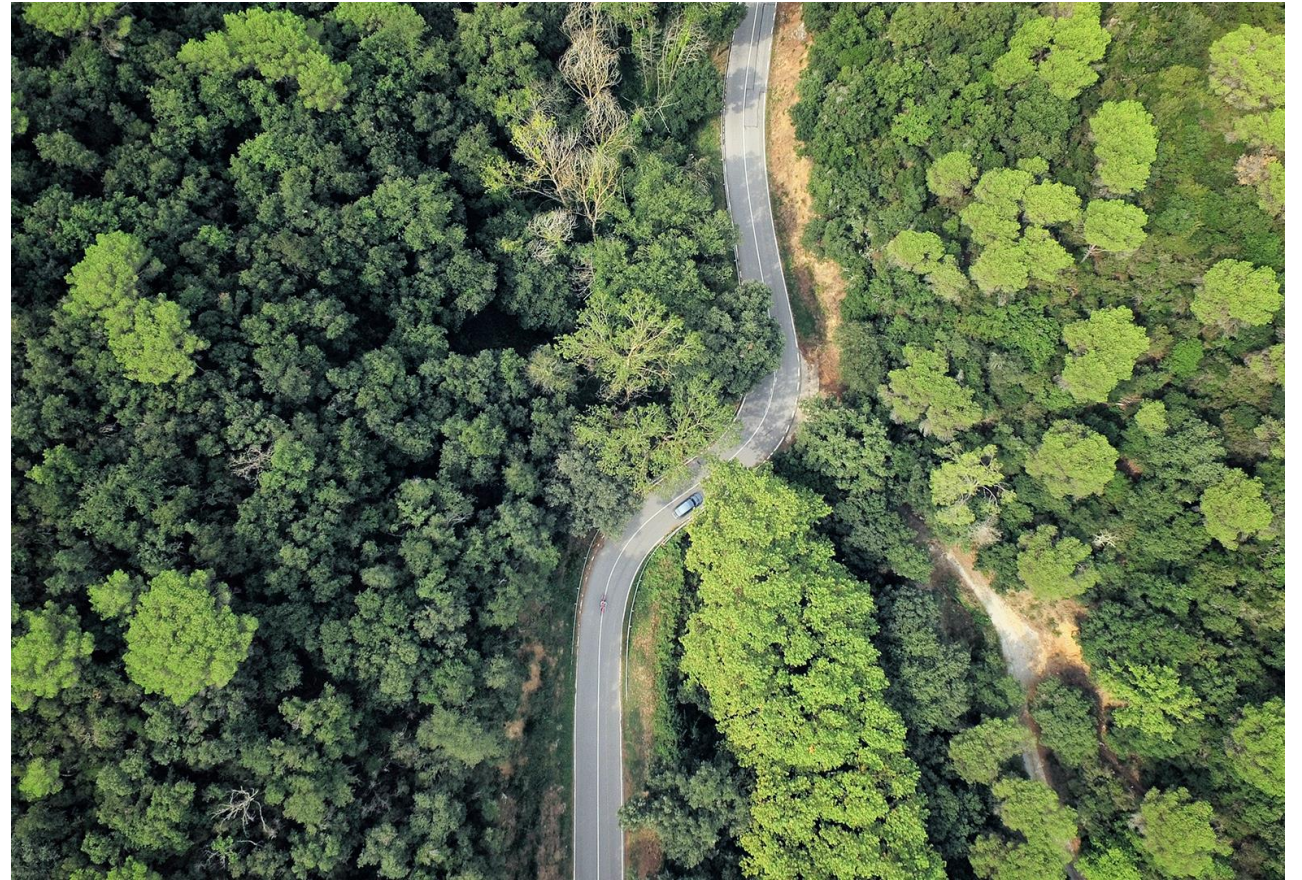


# Population-level Threats

Habitat loss, fragmentation  
Vehicles, ag. equipment  
Predation  
Poor water quality  
Diseases  
Illegal collection  
Invasive species  
Persecution  
Climate change ...



American Toad





# Illegal Collection



**CCITT**  
COLLABORATIVE TO COMBAT  
THE ILLEGAL TRADE IN TURTLES



**Mission:** advance efforts to better understand, prevent, and eliminate the illegal collection and trade of North America's native turtles



**May 2022**

**North Carolina:** 722 eastern box turtles, 122 spotted turtles.



**October 2021**

**Florida:** 3500 turtles including three-striped mud turtles and Florida box turtles.



**September 2021**

**Kentucky:** 915 eastern box turtles.



**May 2021**

**Multiple States:** 134 Florida box turtles, 178 eastern box turtles, 127 wood turtles, 220 spotted turtles, 77 diamondback terrapins, etc.



**December 2020**

**Georgia:** 5952 loggerhead musk turtles, 743 common musk turtles, etc.



**December 2020**

**Multiple States:** 1500 turtles including eastern box turtles, Florida box turtles, spotted turtles, wood turtles.



**January 2020**

**Oklahoma:** 1000 eastern box turtles.



**August 2019**

**Florida:** 4000 turtles including Florida box turtles, eastern box turtles, spotted turtles, diamondback terrapins, and others.



**July 2018**

**New Jersey:** 3500 diamondback terrapins.



# Fear & Persecution



Don't Miss The **BIG**

**SNAKE HUNT and BAR-B-QUE**

At Chadwick, Missouri  
Sat. July 26, 1969

**Look!**

<b>\$2500</b> FOR FIRST LIVE RATTLESNAKE OVER FOUR FEET	<b>\$1000</b> FOR LARGEST LIVE COPPERHEAD OF THE HUNT	<b>\$500</b> FOR MOST LIVE POISONOUS SNAKES OF THE HUNT
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**Judging At 9:00 P. M.**

Entertainment  
By Local Talent Throughout The Entire Evening

ALL PROCEEDS FOR CHADWICK CEMETERY, INC.

MEAL TICKETS MAY BE PURCHASED IN ADVANCE OR AT BARBECUE

NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR SNAKEBITE OR ACCIDENT



# H.230 Considerations

- Intentionality is difficult to prove, so the proposed rules and laws would be difficult to enforce ... [Sec. 6. 10 V.S.A. § 4085 \(a\)](#)
- The July 1, 2025 cut-off date for legally acquiring Pond Sliders as pets is problematic ... [Sec. 7. 10 V.S.A. § 4085](#)
- New language is duplicative of current Rule regulating the importation and possession of wild animals ... [10 V.S.A. § 4085\(b\)\(4\)](#)
- Given the proposed regulation of reptiles and amphibians in Sec. 6, the proposed revisions to §4709(e) may be duplicative and unnecessary

One of the “World’s 100 Worst Invasive Alien Species”



Pond Slider