

ELIOT CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
Focus Areas of Ecological Significance

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Photo: [www.deerfieldriver.org](http://www.deerfieldriver.org)

## Vernal Pools

(a.k.a. Spring Pools)

*Shallow depressions that usually contain water for only part of the year.*

### ***What makes vernal pools so important?***

#### **Potential rare & endangered species habitat**

- *Blanding's Turtle*
- *Spotted Turtle*
- *Ringed Boghaunter Dragonfly*
- *Ribbon Snake*

#### **Enhanced ecosystem services**

- *Exports carbon & nutrients to adjacent forested uplands.*

#### **Significant wildlife habitat**

- *Areas that are designated as significant vernal pools are protected by law under the Natural Resources Protection Act.*

#### **Education & research**

- *There are ongoing efforts by the University of Maine researchers in the Dept. of Wildlife Ecology to identify vernal pools & educate communities about vernal pool ecology.*

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**"The loss of vernal pools and the critical terrestrial habitat around them leads to local loss of amphibian species, a decrease in biodiversity, and a decline in food available for many other animals that live in these areas."**

*-ME Dept. of Env. Protection*



Photo: [www.activerain.trulia.com](http://www.activerain.trulia.com)



Photo: Virginia Herpetological Society



Photo: Tom Murray [www.nhase.com](http://www.nhase.com)

## *What can we do to help?*

### **Reach out to local environmental & conservation organizations**

- *Volunteer.*
- *Attend public events.*
- *Make a donation.*
- *Become a member.*

### **Be an active citizen**

- *Encourage town planners to improve approaches to development that may impact focus area functions.*
- *Monitor & remove invasive plant populations.*
- *Educate recreational users about the ecological, economic, & health benefits of these areas.*

### **Leave a legacy**

- *If you are a landowner, consider adopting a conservation easement that will ensure these lands are preserved for future generations.*

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## *For More Info:*

### **UNIVERSITY OF MAINE**

Dept. of Wildlife Ecology  
Email: [MaineVernalPool@gmail.com](mailto:MaineVernalPool@gmail.com)

### **BEGINNING WITH HABITAT**

Online Toolbox  
[www.beginningwithhabitat.org/toolbox/about\\_toolbox.html](http://www.beginningwithhabitat.org/toolbox/about_toolbox.html)

### **GREAT WORKS REGIONAL LAND TRUST**

[www.gwrlt.org](http://www.gwrlt.org)  
email: [info@gwrlt.org](mailto:info@gwrlt.org)  
ph(207)646-3604

### **To identify a vernal pool**

Maine Dept. of Env. Protection  
Southern ME Regional Office  
(207)822-6300/(888)769-1036  
Ask to speak with the "on-call" person in the Land & Water Bureau, Division of Land Resource Regulation

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