

Photographic Tips

From the Vermont Reptile and Amphibian Atlas Website
<http://www.middlebury.edu/herpatlas>

Although photographs are not required, they are very useful. Even if you are not sure what species you are photographing we should be able to figure it out from your photo.

- Get as close to the subject as you can. However, some point and shoot cameras can not focus if you are closer than four feet from your subject. Check your owner's manual.
- Take two or three pictures from different angles.
- If you have an automatic camera, small dark creatures such as Dusky and Two-lined Salamanders should be photographed against a dark background (gloves, backpack, moss, rock, book cover, dark clothes). Photos taken with the creature in someone's hands will often result in good detail of the hands but no detail of the creature.
- If you have plenty of light consider moving into the shade. Strong shadows make details harder to see.
- When searching in the woods or on dark days, you might not have enough light for a picture. If this is a problem use a flash or fast film (400 or faster).
- Macro lenses can be very helpful for photographing the smaller amphibians.
- Keep your camera and flash handy when you are looking for reptiles and amphibians so that you can photograph and release them immediately.

On the back of the photograph or slide mount write (using indelible ink):

- your name
- the date
- the town
- the county
- the species (if you know it)

In addition, if you send in more than one photo, number each one so that they can be referred to on the accompanying data sheet.