

15th Annual Great Worcester Herp Search Slated for May 9

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By Lauren Holloway - WBOC



BERLIN, Md.- The 15th annual Great Worcester Herp Search will take place Saturday, May 9 when volunteers scour county lands for reptiles and amphibians.

Sponsored by the Coastal Bays Program, Salisbury Zoo, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and Salisbury University, the search kicks off at 9 a.m. at the Coastal Bays Program office at 8219 Stephen Decatur Highway, a quarter-mile south of Frontier Town. A brief pre-hunt training session will feature live turtles, snakes, frogs, and salamanders and explain ways to identify them in the wild. It is free to the public and will be held to prep volunteers for searching three sites in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Last year more than 80 reptiles and amphibians representing 15 species were the result of the search. Finds included ringneck snakes, racers and kingsnakes. Box and mud turtles were also found along with four species of frogs and toads.

In Worcester, there are approximately 19 species of snakes, 15 species of frogs and toads, six species of salamanders, 13 species of turtles, and four species of lizards. The search will provide data to help DNR scientists better understand population trends in this declining group of vertebrates.

This year's herp search sites include public and private parcels in the northern and central part of Worcester County. No animals are harmed or removed from the wild during the search.

Participants should bring a sack lunch and drinks. Groups will return from the field around 12:30 p.m. for lunch then hunt again until approximately 5 p.m. All children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult. Sunscreen, mosquito and tick repellent, greenbriar proof-pants, bright clothing, and boots are recommended.

For more information call the Coastal Bays Program office at 410-213-2297