Area of Coverage

The area covered by this checklist includes Land Between The Lakes (LBL) National Recreation Area and adjacent waters (Kentucky and Barkley lakes and the canal connecting them).

Habitat Diversity

As is true of all living things, the place where an amphibian or reptile resides is determined by an array of environmental conditions, each of which varies on a daily and seasonal basis. Some species are adapted to life in water, whereas others do best on land. And within these two realms, subtypes of aquatic and terrestrial situations are favored. Two aquatic habitats dominate in LBL and adjacent waters. Within LBL proper, over 500 small ponds (woodland and open-land, permanent and temporary) provide homes and/or breeding sites for many kinds of frogs and salamanders and a few varieties of snakes and turtles. Outside LBL in its bordering lakes (Kentucky Lake on the west and Lake Barkley on the north and east), many other species, especially riverine turtles, water snakes and a few impoundment-adapted amphibians, abound. A far less available aquatic habitat (due to the nature of its bedrock and soils) in LBL is the freshwater stream. Here can be found a limited array of brookside salamanders and stream-adapted frogs. Among LBL’s terrestrial habitats, second-growth, oak-hickory forest dominates. Approximately 153,000 of the total 170,000 acres are covered by this type of woodland, which supports many species of salamanders, snakes, lizards and the ubiquitous Eastern Box Turtle. The remaining land area is occupied by fields in one or another stage of succession. These areas harbor a number of species of snakes and lizards.

Key to Abundance Categories

Following each animal’s scientific and common name (in parentheses) is a letter indicating its relative abundance in LBL and/or adjacent impoundments. These assignments are based on voucher specimens in several natural history museums (primarily those at Austin Peay State University, Murray State University and the University of Louisville) and the personal observations made by the authors. All are subject to change as more data are accumulated.

C - Common (widespread, occurring in moderate to large numbers)

U - Uncommon (widespread, but always occurring in low numbers)

L - Locally abundant (restricted distribution but occurring in moderate to large numbers where found)

R - Rare (restricted distribution, occurring in low numbers)

Class AMPHIBIA - AMPHIBIANS

Order: CAUDATA - SALAMANDERS

Family: SIRENIDAE - Sirens

Siren intermedia nettingi - Western Lesser Siren (U)

Family: SALAMANDRIDAE - True Salamanders

Notophthalmus v. viridescens x N. v. louisianensis - Red-spotted x Central Newt (C)

Family: PROTEIDAE - Mudpuppies

Necturus maculosus - Common Mudpuppy (R)

Family: AMBYSTOMATIDAE - Mole Salamanders

Ambystoma maculatum - Spotted Salamander (C)

Ambystoma opacum - Marbled Salamander (C)

Ambystoma talpoideum - Mole Salamander (L)

Ambystoma texanum - Small-mouthed Salamander (R)

Ambystoma tigrinum - Eastern Tiger Salamander (U)

Family: PLETHODONTIDAE - Lungless Salamanders

Desmognathus conanti - Spotted Dusky Salamander (C)

Eurycea cirrigera - Southern Two-lined Salamander (C)

Eurycea longicauda longicauda - Long-tailed Salamander (C)

Eurycea lucifuga - Cave Salamander (U)

Plethodon dorsalis - Northern Zigzag Salamander (C)

Plethodon glutinosus complex - Slimy Salamander (C)

Pseudotriton ruber ruber - Northern Red Salamander (L)
Class: REPTILIA - REPTILES
Order: TESTUDINES - TURTLES
Family: KINOSTERNIDAE - Mud and Musk Turtles
   ____ Kinostemon subrubrum subrubrum - Eastern Mud Turtle (U)

Class: ANURA - FROGS AND TOADS
Order: PELOBATIDAE - Spadefoot Toads
   ____ Scaphiopus holbrookii - Eastern Spadefoot (R)
Family: BUFONIDAE - True Toads
   ____ Anaxyrus americanus americanus - Eastern Spadefoot (R)
   ____ Anaxyrus americanus charlesmithi - Dwarf American Toad (C)
   ____ Anaxyrus fowleri - Fowler’s Toad (C)
Family: HYLIDAE - Treefrogs
   ____ Acris crepitans crepitans - Eastern Cricket Frog (C)
   ____ Hyla chrysoscelis - Cope’s Gray Treefrog (C)
   ____ Hyla cinerea - Green Treefrog (L)
   ____ Pseudacris crucifer - Northern Spring Peeper (C)
   ____ Pseudacris feriarum - Upland Chorus Frog (C)
Family: MICROHYLIDAE - Narrowmouth Toads
   ____ Gastrophryne carolinensis - Eastern Narrow-mouthed Toad (C)
Family: RANIDAE - True Frogs
   ____ Lithobates catesbeianus - Bullfrog (C)
   ____ Lithobates clamitans melanota - Green Frog (C)
   ____ Lithobates sphenoecephalus utricularius - Southern Leopard Frog (C)

Order: SQUAMATA - SNAKES AND LIZARDS
Suborder: Sauria - LIZARDS
Family: IGUANIDAE - Iguanid Lizards
   ____ Sceloporus undulatus - Eastern Fence Lizard (C)
Family: TEIIDAE - Racerunners
   ____ Aspidoscelis sexlineata sexlineata - Eastern Six-lined Racerunner (L)
Family: SCINCIDAE - Skinks
   ____ Scincella lateralis - Little Brown Skink (C)

Suborder: SERPENTES - SNAKES
Family: COLUBRIDAE - Colubrid Snakes
   ____ Carphophis amoeneus helenae - Midwestern Wormsnake (C)
   ____ Cemophora coccinea copei - Northern Scarlet Snake (U)
   ____ Coluber constrictor priapus - Southern Black Racer (C)
   ____ Diadophis punctatus stictogenys - Mississippi Ring-necked Snake (C)
   ____ Heterodon platyrhinos - Eastern Hog-nosed Snake (C)
   ____ Lampropeltis calligaster calligaster - Prairie Kingsnake (U)
   ____ Lampropeltis getula nigra - Eastern Black Kingsnake (C)
   ____ Lampropeltis triangulum elapsoides - Scarlet Kingsnake (L)
   ____ Lampropeltis triangulum synsila - Red Milk Snake (C)
   ____ Nerodia erythrogaster flavigaster x N. e. neglecta - Yellowbelled Watersnake x Copper-bellied Watersnake (C)
   ____ Nerodia rhombifer rhombifer - Northern Diamond-backed Watersnake (C)
   ____ Nerodia sipedon pleuralis - Midland Watersnake (C)
   ____ Opheodrys aestivus aestivus - Northern Rough Greensnake (C)
   ____ Pantherophis spiloides - Gray Ratsnake (C)
   ____ Pituophis melanoleucus melanoleucus - Northern Pinesnake (R)
   ____ Regina septemvittata - Queensnake (R)
   ____ Storeria dekayi wrightorum - Midland Brown Snake (C)
   ____ Storeria occipitomaculata occipitomaculata - Northern Red-bellied Snake (U)
   ____ Tantilla coronata - Southeastern Crowned Snake (U)
Thamnophis sauritus sauritus - Common Ribbonsnake (R)
Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis - Eastern Gartersnake (C)
Virginia valeriae elegans - Western Smooth Earthsnake (C)

Family: VIPERIDAE - Pit Vipers
Agkistrodon contortrix mokasen - Northern Copperhead (C)
Agkistrodon piscivorus leucostoma - Western Cottonmouth (L)
Crotalus horridus - Timber Rattlesnake (U)
Sistrurus miliarius streckeri - Western Pigmy Rattlesnake (R)