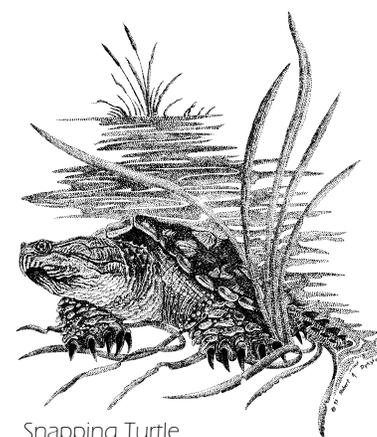


## 8.2 Amphibians & Reptiles

High Park’s Grenadier Pond contains a number of unusual turtle records, however most of these are likely to have originated from captive animals that were released into the pond. One recent record of Common Map Turtle (*Graptemys geographica*) is thought to refer to a released captive since the netted specimen was found to have a drilled hole in its carapace. It is however likely that some individuals present for this and Blanding’s Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*) are of wild origin. A local resident (J. Palock) has released American Toads, Northern Leopard Frogs, Green Frogs, Bullfrogs (*Rana catesbeiana*), Spring Peeper (*Pseudacris crucifer*), Wood Frog (*Rana sylvatica*), Grey Tree Frog (*Hyla versicolor*), Eastern Garter Snake, Brown Snake, Redbelly Snake (*Storeria occipitomaculata*) and Northern Water Snake (*Nerodia sipedon sipedon*) in the Park (B. Yukich, pers. comm. 2001). However, it is unlikely that habitat conditions can support the long term survival of all of these species and monitoring should be conducted to evaluate the success of these releases.

A decline in the aquatic and wetland environments of the Park over the past decades has led to a reduction in the number of amphibian species present in the ponds, and limited historical data is available for analysis. The Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) found no breeding amphibians during calling count surveys in 1996 and 1997, although American Toad adults and tadpoles were seen at Grenadier Pond during that period (T. Chipperfield, pers. comm. 2000). Table 3 below provides information on the most likely species to occur that have also been recorded recently. A lack of well-oxygenated over-wintering habitat may limit the ability of frog species to persist at the Park. Mortality on roads and resulting from capture (collecting) may also be reducing numbers. Generally, the amphibian and reptile community is impoverished and could benefit from habitat restoration activities.



Snapping Turtle

**TABLE 3. Amphibians and reptiles currently on record in High Park** (GLL 2001; B. Yukich, pers. comm. 2001).

| Common Name                 | Scientific Name                     | High Park Status Notes   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Northern Redback Salamander | <i>Plethodon cinereus</i>           | found in Northeast section of the park   |
| American Toad               | <i>Bufo americanus</i>              | now present, but uncommon; reintroduced in 1997 after 14 year absence                          |
| Northern Leopard Frog       | <i>Rana pipiens</i>                 | known to be present in 1970s; recent releases  |
| Green Frog                  | <i>Rana clamitans</i>               | none known since about 1990, other than releases   |
| Eastern Garter Snake        | <i>Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis</i> | likely still present, recent known releases  |
| Snapping Turtle             | <i>Chelydra serpentina</i>          | common   |
| Midland Painted Turtle      | <i>Chrysemys picta marginata</i>    | common at the pond, declining in number  |
| Red-eared Slider            | <i>Trachemys scripta</i>            | common at the pond; non-native species, frequently released and apparently able to over-winter |
| Little Brown Snake          | <i>Storeria dekayi</i>              | present around greenhouses, recent known releases  |