



Readying for Big Night 2024



Dear Connie,

I grew up vaguely accepting the notion that March "comes in like a lion, goes out like a lamb", the origins of which may have been ancient belief in cosmic balance, perhaps perpetuated (true for me) by a desire to remind ourselves that if we don't like the weather now, we needn't worry because it's certain to change.

Nowadays the advent of March signifies for me the stirrings of far different animals: amphibians following annual pathways across rain-wet ground to their breeding places. This migration is dramatically known as "Big Night" - and dramatic it is - scores of peepers, wood frogs, toads, spotted salamanders and many other salamander and amphibian species moving in waves worthy of Lord-Of-The-Rings-battle-scene F/X.

Big Night is a misnomer, however, in suggesting this happens on only one night. More often there is a first night, which may be followed by several others. This year the weather got ahead of us and migrations began Tuesday and Wednesday last week. Conditions look favorable for additional migration events over the course of next week, including **TONIGHT** (could be ... who knows).

To witness a Big Night is awesome. KLT and our peers love to share the wonder through vernal pool walks including this year's at Sharon Audubon and Deer Pond Farm in Sherman (find out more below). But it's complicated. Because for many of these precious amphibians - some of which can live more than 20 years - their path of migration has been fractured by roadways, leading each year to the death of significant numbers - enough in some cases to decimate local populations - squashed by passing cars. The amphibians can't change their routes - but we can change our behaviors to help them survive.

In IYKYK fashion, people in communities throughout the Northeast have awoken to the significance of Big Night and taken up the challenge to prevent amphibian death on roads. Read more, if you like, about how they are doing this in [Maine](#), [New Hampshire](#), [Massachusetts](#), and [New York](#). Below, enjoy KLT Guest Correspondent Alison Robey's reflections on Big Night here in Connecticut.

If you like to watch you might be inspired by [this video](#) sharing out the grassroots efforts of a community in New Jersey.

One of the best things you can do to avoid unnecessary carnage is to refrain from driving in the early evening hours during migration nights, and if you can't avoid driving altogether to avoid roads with known migratory crossings. *How do I know where these are, you ask?* Good question, and a good place to start. This year KLT is collecting information from the community to map crossing places. We will add your observations to our current knowledge of crossing points (Skiff Mountain Rd, Dolldorf Rd, Schaghticoke Rd, Spooner Hill Rd, Mud Pond Rd, Sumner Rd) to help guide future efforts. Please let us know by [email](#) and through our [social accounts](#) what you see, and where and when you see it. Thank you for taking the time to help!

Just like the amphibians, KLT is excited and gearing up for spring. We have events planned for you including a celebration of this year's [extraordinary solar eclipse](#), Earth Day activities, and Spring gatherings for amateur birders. We have a [new call for volunteers](#) to help in a variety of ways. We are [recruiting for summer interns](#) both high school and college-aged. And we hope you will engage in communities like Kent's new [environmental book club](#) and Connecticut's many [hiking groups](#).

Keep your eye on your inbox for information about these and more - but most importantly, keep your eyes on the road, for salamanders' sake (will it be ... yes it will)!

Connie Manes, Executive Director

The Wait for Big Night

Alison Robey



Picture this: the sky is dark and wet above you. Raindrops pour down through the branches and patter into the crunching leaves under your bare feet. Around you, hard crusts of old, icy snow erode into rivulets of water to join the growing puddles of mud. Below you, the first fragile shoots of trout

lilies and crocuses are just poking their heads up into the slowly thawing mud.

Far ahead, something new is happening – something you have waited for all winter long. The pouring rain after so many dry nights; the thawing snow after so many frozen weeks; the warming air after so many cold sleeps. For you, the conditions all add up to one crucial thing: the Big Night.

[Read on](#) to learn about local amphibians' impressive annual journeys, the increasing challenges they face and why that matters more than ever in our shared environment.

Local Vernal Pool Events

Click Images for Details and Registration

 Sharon Audubon Center created an event.
1d · 🌐



THU, APR 18 AT 7 PM
Vernal Pool Exploration
99 W Cornwall Rd, Sharon, CT 06069-2104, United States

★ Interested ▾

VERNAL POOL WALK



*Eastern Newt photo by
Kyle Paist*

April 13, 2024, 10 a.m. to Noon at Deer Pond Farm

No fee

What a great way to celebrate the season of Spring by spending some time at Deer Pond Farm learning about vernal pools! Dutchess Land Conservancy Director of Education, Julie Hart, will be partnering with us to lead this guided hike. We'll start off at one of the nearby ponds for an overview of how vernal pools are different than other waterways. Then we'll head to one of many vernal pools to look, listen and learn about the

amphibians and other wildlife that rely on them, and talk about how we can help to protect and conserve these special habitats.

Register [here](#) for the April 13 vernal pool walk.

This program meets at Deer Pond Farm, 57 Wakeman Hill Road, Sherman, CT 06784.

Become a Member!

Within our cherished community the Kent Land Trust safeguards an ecosystem which in turn supports us all, at the most basic level: integrity of the air we breathe and water we drink. We envision a community where treasured landscapes are protected for today and the future. Where diverse living things continue in healthy coexistence, supported through the challenges of a changing environment. And where iconic outdoor spaces inspire people to connect. Our role is daunting, but compelling. We promise assiduous focus on Kent's distinct needs even as we join colleagues doing the same throughout our region and beyond. Your membership each year directly advances this vision.

Thank you most sincerely for your generous support!

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