



## American Toad *Anaxyrus americanus*

American toads are found throughout Canada and the Eastern United States.

They are medium sized toads, measuring between 2-3.5 inches. The color and patterns on the skin are variable and can change depending on habitat, humidity, stress and temperature. Colors may vary between yellowish to brown to black and they can be solid or speckled. They have spots that only contain one or two warts per spot. The belly is usually spotted.

American toads need a semi-permanent pond or other shallow waterway in order to breed, get water and live when young. They also need deep vegetation for cover and hunting.

Once they find a habitat they prefer, they tend to remain in that area. They will seek shelter under board walks, in window wells, under ledges and rocks and even in wood piles.

These toads eat a variety of foods such as worms, ants, spiders, mealworms, crickets, slugs and more.

American toads hibernate during the winter. They will usually dig backwards and bury themselves in the dirt of their summer home, but they may also overwinter in another area nearby.

Toads are great additions to any garden since they eat the pests that may plague the plants. You can encourage toads to stay in your garden by planting native plants that will attract the native insects they eat and provide hiding places for the toad. Build a brush pile and leave leaves on the ground. Have a water garden that is at least 1 foot deep and place a branch in the water along with aquatic vegetation for the toads to attach their eggs to.



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### **Ask A Naturalist**

Fun Facts:

- American toads can eat up to 1000 insects a day!
- You will not develop warts if you touch a toad.
- They drink water through a pouch on the abdomen called a seat patch.
- They don't ribbit.
- Toads have sticky tongues like frogs.

