

INTERMITTENT WOODLAND POOL

An intermittent woodland pool is a small, shallow wetland mostly or entirely surrounded by forest and isolated from streams and other wetlands. It typically has standing water during winter and spring but dries up by mid- to late summer. The absence of fish (due to seasonal drying of the pool) is key for a **special group of amphibians** that require fish-free breeding and nursery habitats. Leaf litter from the surrounding forest is the base of the pool's food web, and forest provides essential habitat for the amphibians during the non-breeding seasons.



Spotted turtle

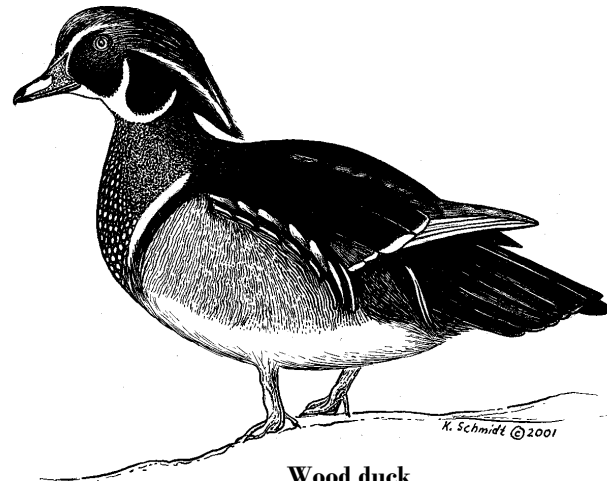
TYPICAL PLANTS

- Red maple, slippery elm, green ash, swamp white oak, pin oak, black tupelo (usually at the edge or scattered within the pool)
- Highbush blueberry, swamp azalea, buttonbush
- Sensitive fern, sedges, duckweeds, mosses

SPECIES OF CONSERVATION CONCERN

- Featherfoil, Virginia chain fern
- Black dash (butterfly), springtime physa (snail)
- Jefferson salamander, marbled salamander, wood frog, spotted turtle
- Wood duck, American black duck

These are just a few of the species of regional or statewide conservation concern that are known to occur in intermittent woodland pools. See Kiviat & Stevens (2001) for a more extensive list.



Wood duck

THREATS TO INTERMITTENT WOODLAND POOLS

Intermittent woodland pools are frequently **drained** or **filled** by landowners and developers, used as **dumping grounds**, **treated for mosquito control**, and sometimes **converted into ornamental ponds**. They are typically small (often less than 0.1 ac), and are often overlooked in environmental reviews of proposed developments. Even when the pools themselves are untouched, the **surrounding forest** so essential to their ecological function is frequently destroyed or degraded.

CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ Avoid filling, draining, or excavating intermittent woodland pools.
- ❖ Minimize development and road construction in forests within 750 ft of an intermittent woodland pool to protect the adult habitat and travelways of pool-breeding amphibians.
- ❖ Avoid fragmentation of upland forests and preserve migration corridors between pools.
- ❖ Avoid activities near intermittent woodland pools that would increase soil erosion, alter runoff volume, or contribute pollutants. These activities include logging, construction of roads or buildings, ATV use, or use of pesticides and fertilizers. Organisms of these pools are sensitive to changes in water quality.



Marbled salamander

References

- Calhoun, A.J.K. and M.W. Klemens. 2002. Best development practices: Conserving pool-breeding amphibians in residential and commercial developments in the northeastern United States. MCA Technical Paper No. 5, Metropolitan Conservation Alliance, Wildlife Conservation Society, Bronx, NY. 57 p.
- Semlitsch, R.D. 2000. Size does matter: The value of small isolated wetlands. National Wetlands Newsletter 22(1):5-6,13.
- Kiviat, E. and G. Stevens. 2001. Biodiversity assessment manual for the Hudson River estuary corridor. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Albany. 508 p.