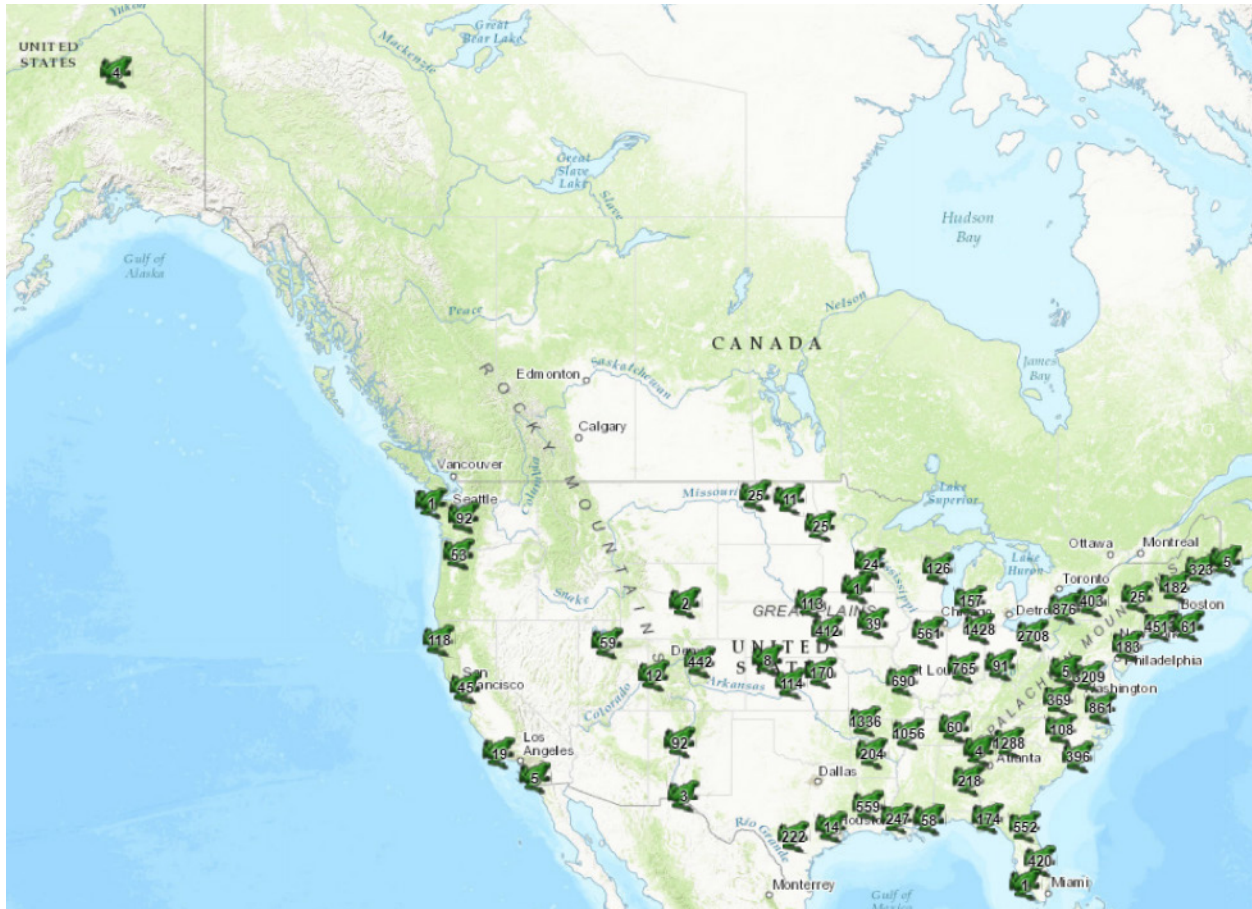




INTRODUCTION



2016 was another fantastic year for FrogWatch USA! In this 18th year of the program, 616 new wetland sites were registered, and at least one observation was recorded at 894 wetland sites across the country. Approximately 500 volunteers in 41 states and Washington, D.C. recorded 11,777 individual species observations or reported “no species heard” during their monitoring visit—their observations are displayed on the above map. Five new chapters were established, expanding opportunities for people throughout the United States to connect with their local wetlands, learn about frogs and toads, and generate high quality scientific information. This document compiles a snapshot of data submitted online, as well as the data, comments, and stories conveyed in chapter coordinators’ reports of the 2016 season. AZA thanks coordinators for sharing this information. We hope that this *Summary and Achievement Report* might help and inspire you for FrogWatch USA seasons to come!

Compiled by John Lynagh, AZA Conservation & Science Intern, Arslan Ahmad, AZA Conservation & Science Program Assistant, and Shelly Grow, AZA Director of Conservation Programs

THANK YOU FOR SUBMITTING AN ANNUAL REPORT
EACH OF THE PAST FIVE YEARS (2012-2016)

Beardsley-Peabody FrogWatch (Conn.)

Brevard Zoo FrogWatch USA (Fla.)

Buffalo Zoo FrogWatch (N.Y.)

Buttonwood Park Zoo FrogWatch (Mass.)

Cheyenne Bottoms FrogWatch (Kan.)

Detroit Zoo's FrogWatch (Mich.)

Erie Zoological Society (Pa.)

Fontenelle Forest FrogWatch (Neb.)

Fort Wayne Children's Zoo FrogWatch USA Chapter (Ind.)

FrogWatch Cosley Zoo (Ill.)

High Rock Park in the Greenbelt (N.Y.)

Mystic Aquarium FrogWatch USA (Conn.)

Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium FrogWatch USA (Pa.)

Saint Louis Zoo FrogWatch USA (Mo.)

Santa Barbara Zoo FrogWatch USA (Calif.)

Virginia Tidewater Chapter (Va.)

Zoo Miami FrogWatch (Fla.)






2016 AT A GLANCE



141 chapters in **41 states** and the **District of Columbia** (see map above)

57 chapters from **29 states** submitted an annual report 

 **142 training sessions** attended by **1,697 volunteers**

58% chapters provided training in the field

58% of volunteers tested to certify competency in monitoring protocol and call identification

90% of tested volunteers received certification 



19 of 52 chapters held **40 community events**

6,838 visits to **894 sites**

89 species observed



25+ online news segments featuring FrogWatch USA and/or chapters

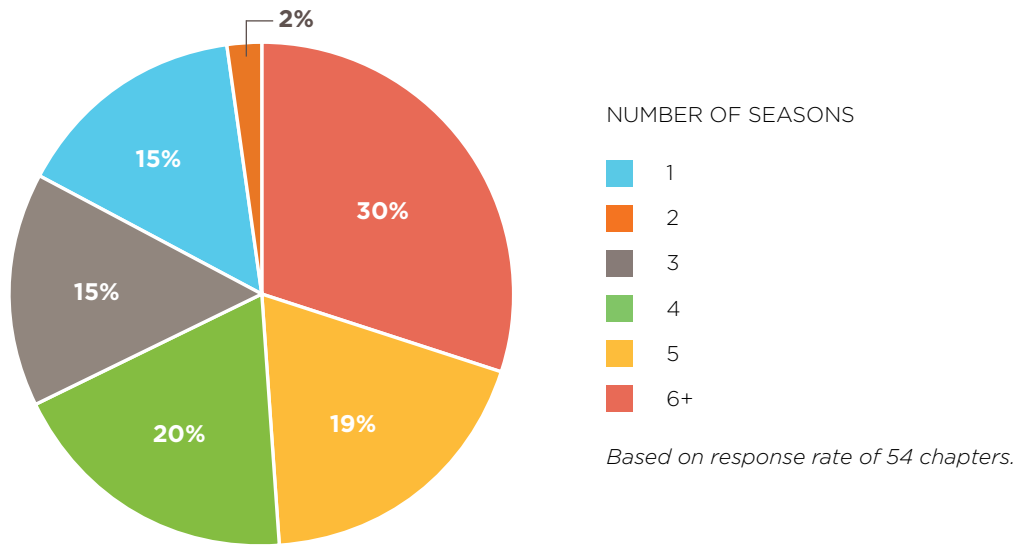
14 chapters featured in media (on television news, on the radio, and more) 

74% of chapters have a social media presence



11 requests for use of data by universities, outside entities like NASA, and by people associated with individual chapters exploring scientific questions

HOW MANY SEASONS HAVE CHAPTERS BEEN ACTIVE?



CHAPTER STANDOUTS

Most training sessions held (7) - North Carolina Aquarium FrogWatch USA (N.C.)

Most volunteers trained (140) - North Carolina Aquarium FrogWatch USA (N.C.)

Most volunteers certified (100) - Roger Williams Park Zoo FrogWatch USA (R.I.)

Most new volunteers (85) - Mystic Aquarium FrogWatch USA (Conn.)

Most returning volunteers (TIED at 45) - Beardsley-Peabody FrogWatch (Conn.) and Roger Williams Park Zoo FrogWatch USA (R.I.)

SAFETY FIRST!

The safety of chapter coordinators and volunteers is of utmost priority when participating in FrogWatch USA, and monitoring at quiet sites at night poses unique challenges. Jesse, of North Carolina State Parks FrogWatch (N.C.) wrote that “During a NAAMP monitoring route (not yet FrogWatch USA), I had a shotgun pulled on me while I was listening to frogs on the side of the road. Once the person understood what I was doing, he was not a threat. Needless to say, I didn’t stick around there to finish the survey.”

Jesse was well-equipped to explain and diffuse the situation and took the right course of action by leaving the site quickly; are you preparing volunteers likewise? At a minimum, volunteers should be reminded that any wetland site they monitor must be legally accessible. If the site is located in a park or preserve, the volunteer will need to obtain permission to be there after dark, since many public lands close at dusk. If the site is located on private property that does not belong to the volunteer, s/he must obtain permission from the landowner to use the site and should bring a copy of that permission with them every time s/he monitors. Volunteers should also be reminded to carry a fully charged cell phone and either to monitor with a partner or let someone know where s/he is and when the volunteer intends to return. While chapter coordinators should review regional safety concerns with their volunteers; volunteers are responsible for ensuring their own safety. General safety precautions are also posted on AZA’s website: <https://www.aza.org/frogwatch-monitoring-protocols>

Rachel of the Department of Energy & Environment (DOEE) FrogWatch (D.C.) used the AZA Network to share with all FrogWatch USA coordinators the business card-sized identification cards her chapter provides to volunteers in their training resource folder. Look for her message and post copies of any resources you use to prepare your volunteers. Remember, safety first!

CONGRATULATIONS IN ORDER

Volunteers from the FrogWatch Researchers of Greenville Zoo (FROGZ) chapter wrote letters to their state government in support of a bill granting Wildlife Sanctuary status to Lake Conestee Nature Park—a park in South Carolina with two registered FrogWatch USA monitoring sites. The bill passed! Learn more about the park: <http://lakeconesteenaturepark.com/>

Mark from the Alaska FrogWatch USA chapter continued exploring the question of how far north amphibians can live for his master’s thesis at University of Alaska Fairbanks. He will use data collected by his chapter’s volunteers on wood frogs for his research. Learn more about Mark’s work: <http://bit.ly/2daG6C6>

The Beardsley-Peabody FrogWatch chapter was invited to present about the FrogWatch program at the annual meeting for the Connecticut Outdoor and Environmental Education Association (COEEA).

MEMORABLE MOMENTS

“The act of doing the surveys placed me at some wonderful and unexpected nature experiences, like seeing great horned owls mate, and being in a firefly wonder with numbers I had no idea would be there, and beavers, slapping their tails, and fish jumping and insects singing... It was truly joyful.” —LAURA OF FRIENDS OF DYKE MARSH FROGWATCH (VA.)

“For our July monitoring session, there were a couple of college students from New Jersey who found FrogWatch on the NYC Parks website when looking for a unique date opportunity in NYC.”

—JESSICA OF HIGH ROCK PARK IN THE GREENBELT (N.Y.)

“We held observation nights with a local elementary school; we averaged 80 participants for each of the 5 sessions. They have turned FrogWatch into an afterschool club.” —ANDY OF NORTH CAROLINA AQUARIUM FROGWATCH USA (N.C.)

SPECIAL SIGHTINGS

"We heard and recorded the call of the Barking Treefrog (*Hyla gratiosa*), a Tier II state-threatened species, in First Landing State Park, VA." —JOHN OF THE VIRGINIA TIDEWATER CHAPTER (VA.)

"It was our first season, but we had a couple of surprises! 1) Fowler's Toad heard calling at one of the listening stations in Heritage Island Marshes during the final monitoring visit on 7/11. It was really late activity for the species, but we were monitoring as a group and recordings were taken. Pretty wild! 2) Five species were documented (and a sixth upstream) at a site that was previously buried and was restored for wildlife habitat by DOEE [Department of Energy and Environment] in 2014. One person in the neighborhood reported never hearing any species prior to the restoration project, and we were all pleasantly surprised by the species diversity in a relatively short amount of time."

—RACHEL OF DOEE FROGWATCH (D.C.)

"Cricket frogs appear to be reestablishing further north in our territory."

—KATHY OF FORT WAYNE CHILDREN'S ZOO FROGWATCH USA CHAPTER (IND.)

"Hearing a bullfrog for the first time on site—I've worked here 12 years and this is the first time."

—KATE OF SANDY CREEK FROGWATCHERS (GA.)

EVENTS TO ENGAGE AND APPRECIATE

End of season potluck with amphibian statistics, amphibian prize wheel, and an evening nature hike identifying frogs and other species —BREVARD ZOO FROGWATCH USA (FLA.)

Gave frog calendars to volunteers as a "thank-you" —CHEYENNE BOTTOMS FROGWATCH (KAN.)

Midseason social for all volunteers —FROGWATCH OF THE FLINT HILLS (KAN.)

End of season brunch with summaries and reports for all of the chapter's previous FrogWatch seasons

—ROGER WILLIAMS PARK ZOO FROGWATCH USA (R.I.)

End of season volunteer appreciation luncheon —BUTTONWOOD PARK ZOO FROGWATCH (MASS.)

Season wrap-up talk to discuss the season and provide volunteers with FrogWatch completion certificates

—ABQ BIOPARK FROGWATCH (N.M.)

Pre-season kickoff event, end of season outreach, and a fundraiser as part of a multi-organizational event

—NORTHWEST ARKANSAS FROGWATCH (ARK.)

Volunteers were invited to the local Department of Environmental Protection volunteer awards banquet

—MONTGOMERY COUNTY FROGWATCH (MD.)

End of season celebration for volunteers who submitted the most observations —MYSTIC AQUARIUM FROGWATCH USA (CONN.)

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