



**MIDDLETOWN**  
Rhode Island

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## **NORTHERN LEOPARD FROG SURVEY PLANNED**

MIDDLETOWN, R.I. (MARCH 24 2022) – In coming weeks, part of the Maidford River will be surveyed for northern leopard frogs.

The Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program has documented the presence of the state-listed frog in this area of Middletown. Since the exact location is not known, officials said the survey is being conducted to determine if they are living in the wetlands along Berkeley Avenue, an area being considered for drainage and flooding improvements.

If northern leopard frogs are detected, special precautions will be needed to make sure the habitat of the protected frogs (*Lithobates pipiens*) aren't impacted by any of the work that's been discussed.

Project Leader Elizabeth Scott said the surveys will take place every two weeks beginning the first week of April and concluding in the last weeks of June. Each will take place about 30 minutes after sunset and end before midnight. The surveys will occur in each of five listening stations along Berkeley Avenue between Green End Avenue and the Hoogendoorn nursery land.

“This is an exciting and interesting development for the Maidford River Restoration Project,” Scott said. “We appreciate everyone’s patience while this survey work is underway.”

According to information from the state Department of Environmental Management, the northern leopard frog are considered a “rare” species in Rhode Island. Based on the latest information, they are only found in Newport and Bristol counties in the Ocean State.

DEM data showed they live in open, grassy habitats in marginal areas and breed in seasonal wetlands or shallow pools without fish. They eat ants, worms, snakes, other frogs and anything else they can fit into their mouths.

During the winter months, DEM data indicated leopard frogs enter a dormant state, resting on the bottom of rivers and lakes. In March, they come out and make their way to breeding grounds, where they mate between late March and early May. Tadpoles metamorphose around July and go back into hibernation around October.

The DEM said leopard frogs have a bright green or copper back, usually with round or oval brown spots haloed in iridescent greenish-yellow. Limbs have smaller brown spots and their lips are light colored. Their bellies are white or cream and they usually grow to about seven centimeters in length.

DEM data indicated their call sounds like a low pitched “snore” similar to pickerel frog, but followed by shorter, lower notes.

For more information about frogs in Rhode Island, visit <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnatres/fishwild/pdf/frog.pdf> online. For additional details about the Maidford River Restoration Project, visit <https://snepnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Presentation-to-Floodplain-Property-Owners-FINAL.pdf> online.

**Document Link: <https://www.middletownri.com/DocumentCenter/View/4246/nycu-frog>**

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