

**FIELD-LEARNING ACTIVITY | Herp Walks at Allanach-Wolf
Woodlands**

Friday March 28, 2025

7:30-9:30 pm

Saturday March 29, 2025

10am-12pm

Allanach-Wolf Woodlands

Windham, CT

Connecticut State
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

Herpetologist **Dr. Susan Herrick** from the University of Connecticut's [Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology](#) will be leading a nighttime walk to observe the nocturnal spring breeding activity of local frogs and a morning walk to search for the results—frog eggs! [The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History](#) is partnering with [Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historic Trust](#) to host these field-learning activities with Dr. Herrick as part of an ongoing research project to observe and track the herps that seek shelter in artificial habitats called coverboards throughout the Allanach-Wolf Woodlands.

Dr. Herrick studies herpetology and behavioral ecology at UConn Storrs. During these guided hikes, she will explain the ecology and behavior of the herps that people would commonly encounter in Connecticut in their native habitat.

*** These events are free and open to the public, but space is limited and separate registration is required for each date! ***

Visit <https://csmnh.uconn.edu/programs> for more information and to register for one or both of the hikes.

Morning hike is recommended for participants aged 8 and up; evening hike is recommended for participants aged 12 and up, and those who are comfortable traversing the woods at night. Those 16 and under must be accompanied by a chaperone. These hikes may be challenging for

some and will include hilly, wet areas and forays off trail to view coverboards and wade into vernal pools or ponds. These events will be held rain or shine!

If you require an accommodation to participate in this event, please contact the CSMNH at 860-486-4460 or CSMNHinfo@uconn.edu by **Monday March 24, 2025**.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local Herpetologist Leads Evening and Morning Hikes to Observe Results of Native Frogs' Spring Breeding Behaviors

Windham, CT – Herpetologist Dr. Susan Herrick from the University of Connecticut's [Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology \(EEB\)](#) will bring participants into the ponds and vernal pools of Allanach-Wolf Woodlands to observe the nocturnal spring breeding activity of local frogs and search for the results—frog eggs! On the evening of March 28, she will lead a group through the nighttime woods to observe the sounds and activity of local frog species' breeding behaviors. On the morning of March 29, she will return to the woodlands to find the results of the past night's activities. On the way, hike participants will look for other hidden [herpetofauna](#), including frogs, salamanders, snakes and more in the field.

The [Connecticut State Museum of Natural History](#) (CSMNH) has partnered with [Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historic Trust](#) to host these field-learning activities with Dr. Herrick each season. They are part of an ongoing research project to observe and track the herps that seek shelter in artificial habitats called coverboards. The goal of this joint research project is to gather data about the animals that live in the Allanach-Wolf Woodlands, a property owned and protected by Joshua's Trust.

The goal of the public hikes is to invite the community to learn about local Connecticut amphibians and reptiles, and how scientists use coverboards to regularly observe these animals in the field. Dr. Herrick will guide hikers through the field site, where participants will search for herpetofauna, learn about their behaviors, and the habitats where these animals are usually found.

Coverboards are artificial habitats placed in nature by scientists that small animals seek out and use for shelter. Scientists place boards of various sizes in wooded areas near water and visit them on a regular schedule. They identify the variety of animals they observe to learn about the different species who make the forest home. Information such as air,



soil, and water temperature are recorded to learn more about the local environment. To date seven coverboards have been placed in various spots throughout the Woodlands.

Dr. Herrick is a professor in the Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology at the University of Connecticut in Storrs. She studies herpetology and behavioral ecology, with particular interest in social behavior and acoustic interactions among frogs. During these guided hikes she will explain the ecology and mating behavior of common herps found in local forests. In addition, participants will learn about data collection for a new census of herpetofauna that are attracted to wooden coverboards.

Morning hike (Saturday March 29, 10am-12pm) is recommended for participants aged 8 and up; evening walk (Friday March 29, 7:30-9:30pm) is recommended for participants aged 12 and up, and those who are comfortable traversing the woods at night. Those 16 and under must be

accompanied by a chaperone. These hikes may be challenging for some and will include hilly, wet areas and forays off trail to view coverboards and wade into vernal pools or ponds. Heavy-weight, water-proof boots are recommended, as are pants and headlamps. We will have headlamps and other field equipment available for use. Vernal pools may be up to adults' knees – wear your waders if you've got them! These events will be held rain or shine!

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If you require an accommodation to participate in this event, please contact the CSMNH at 860-486-4460 or CSMNHinfo@uconn.edu by **Monday March 24, 2025**.

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