

Brianna Carlson
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LD 72

Good Afternoon Representatives,

My name is Brianna Carlson, I am a resident of Caribou Maine. I come before you today to encourage you to designate the Spring Peeper, a frog commonly found throughout our state, as the Maine State Amphibian. I have a Bachelor's of Science in Biology Masters of Science in Marine Biology from The College of Charleston. But perhaps more important than that, I am the mother of the 2024 Limestone Scout Troop 193 Camp Roosevelt Frog Catching Champion. This is not a regular scout award, but one that his leaders created, inspired by how many hours he spent catching frogs at the lakeside, and how many other scouts he involved in the activity. My son taught other kids how to wet their hands before holding a frog, to only hold them for a short time, to only catch a frog once (maybe twice if it was a good one), and to hold them correctly so that their bodies were protected. Where did he learn all of this? Well, I taught him, I am after all a biologist. I am also a homeschooling parent, and try to treat the things we encounter in life as an opportunity to learn.

The Spring Peeper is an easy and welcome animal encounter in Maine. Its call can be heard throughout the state, though finding the animal is a bit trickier than hearing one. Mainers know in their bones that the sound of the Spring Peeper is the sound of winter loosening its grip, making it a beloved sound. The Spring Peeper, whose call is known and loved by both Mainers and those who choose to vacation here in our great state, is the ideal frog to name as the new Maine State Amphibian. Doing so will likely increase interpretive representation of the animal at State and National parks. This will give visitors to our state new ways to appreciate the Spring Peeper. It will also provide students of our state and others impetus to study this animal. Perhaps they will learn how important amphibians are to biologists studying toxicology, as they are considered an "indicator species," reflecting the overall health of a location. Perhaps they will gain appreciation for the pest control functions the Spring Peepers provide. Or maybe, and perhaps better, they will learn to explore forests at the waters edge near sunset, trying to follow the call of the Spring Peeper, building memories with their families that they will recall for all time.

I ask you today to provide this designation of State Amphibian to the Spring Peeper of Maine.