

EXCLUDE CERTAIN AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES FROM THE DEFINITION OF SMALL GAME

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Co-Sponsors: Burdick, Bores, Davila, Manktelow, Smullen, Miller	Co-Sponsors:
REFERRED TO: ORDERED TO THIRD READING	REFERRED TO: ENVIRONMENTAL CONVERSATION, Senator Harckham, Chair



BACKGROUND:

- We are experiencing a global extinction crisis driven by climate change, habitat destruction, and pollution. Amphibians and reptiles are among the most endangered animal species on the planet. 40% of amphibians worldwide are threatened with extinction. 60% of the world's turtles are threatened or already extinct.
- There are two amphibians and ten reptiles currently listed as threatened or endangered in New York, with an additional ten species on the special concern list. New York does not have a baseline inventory of populations of native frogs, toads, salamanders, newts, snakes, lizards or turtles so we do not know the extent of the decline in our state over the last decades. Anecdotally, it is high. The DEC Atlas project has attempted to map distributions of our amphibians and reptiles and is currently using volunteers to collect more data on these animals, but many local populations are already in severe decline or extirpated.
- Given the extreme threat to these sensitive creatures, it is common sense to prohibit a further reduction in their populations due to hunting. This bill would remove certain amphibians and reptiles from the list of animals that can be taken as small game in our state. The bill will not affect nuisance permits or the rights of farmers to take certain animals on their own farmland.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BILL:

- **This bill removes native amphibians and reptiles from the list of small game that can be taken with a hunting or fishing license in New York with the exception of bullfrogs and snapping turtles.**
- **It removes native frogs, excluding bullfrogs, from the list of animals that may be hunted by longbow, gun, raptors, spearing, catching with hands, or by use of a club or hook, and allows DEC to determine the manner of taking for bullfrogs.**
- It amends the definition of "protected wildlife" and adds a new definition of "wild reptiles" and "wild amphibians."