

The Variety of Life at Tuxis Pond



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A photo essay by Allison M. Maltese



A pair of Eastern painted turtles enjoys the warm sun at Tuxis Pond.



Tuxis Pond, a 4.1 acre wetland, is owned by the town of Madison, CT. In the mid-1990s this boardwalk was constructed at the west edge of the pond to connect pedestrians to the downtown area.



According to Ducks Unlimited, a “typical wetland can support 150-175 species on average. This beautiful pond is just a block from busy Route 1.



In mid-May, when the temperatures are still cooler, the cold-blooded turtles come out to bask in the sun, and to look for a mate. They mate in both spring and autumn.



A female bullfrog is well camouflaged among the reeds and common duckweed (also called lesser duckweed).



This young snapping turtle shared a tree root perch with the painted turtles.



A pair of Canada geese keep watch over their goslings at the pond's edge. "Every species of duck, goose and swan in North America depends on wetland habitat throughout their life cycle," according to Ducks Unlimited.



Yellow flag irises (*iris pseudocarpus*) thrive in several locations around the pond. While pretty to look at they are an invasive species, and need controlling.



A Monarch butterfly gathers nectar from Spicebush blossoms.



A white water lily blossom and foliage (*Nymphaea odorata*).



An Eastern painted turtle emerges to nibble at a yellow pond lily blossom (spatterdock). They also eat the leaves and roots.



An Eastern painted turtle basks on an old tire. The animals in the pond must coexist with a growing amount of trash in and around the pond.