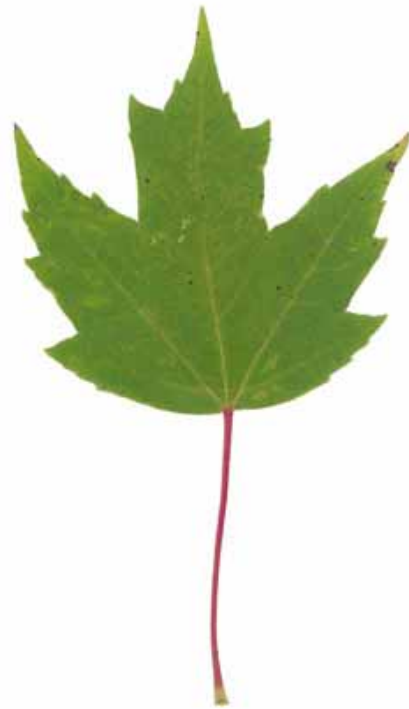


Ephemeral or Vernal Pool



This one of many ephemeral or vernal pools in the park. The ponds form in the spring as the snow begins to melt and spring rains shower down. The ponds often dry up by the end of summer. Ephemerals are important to certain amphibians such as frogs and salamanders, who can lay their eggs here and not have predators such as fish eat them. Ephemeral ponds offer a unique and critical habitat in a forest setting for breeding invertebrates (insects) feeding songbirds and for mammals. They also will foster the growth of plants adapted to wetter soils such as smartweed and red or swamp maple, both of which are evident around this pool.