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SALAMANDERS AND NEWTS

Spotted Salamander

Ambystoma maculatum

Ambystoma maculatum is a sturdy, 15-25 cm salamander from the deciduous forests of North America, black or dark grey with two rows of large yellow to orange spots along the back. Adults live hidden under leaves and wood and in burrows in the soil and come out at night, while eggs and larvae develop in the forest's fishless ponds. The species is placid and does best kept cool.

Family: Ambystomatidae

Mild skin toxins

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**15-25 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**15-25 years**
Active	**At night**
Lifestyle	**Terrestrial and burrowing**
Habitat	**Temperate woodland and meadow**
Skin toxins	**Mild** Wash your hands after contact and keep your fingers away from your eyes and mouth
Difficulty	**Beginner**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Development	**Larvae in water**
Egg-laying site	**In water**
Sexually mature	**24-84 months**
Eggs per season	**100-370**
Hatching	**28-49 days**
Larval period	**60-120 days** from hatching to metamorphosis
Larval diet	**Other larvae and small aquatic invertebrates (daphnia, mosquito larvae)**
Parental care	**None**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**50 × 30 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 1 adult
Temperature, day	**14-20 °C**
Temperature, night	**10-16 °C**
Humidity	**80-95%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Not required**
Diet	**Insects and worms/snails**
Kept	**Singly or in pairs**

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Not listed**
EU annex	**Not listed**
IUCN	**Least Concern (LC)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	One adult can manage with a floor area of 50 × 30 cm, two adults at least 75 × 30 cm. Floor area is more important than height, and 30 cm in height is enough.
TEMPERATURE	During the day the temperature should be 14-20 °C and at night 10-16 °C. The species is cool-loving and most active at 10-21 °C.
HUMIDITY AND MISTING	The substrate should be moist, but never wet or muddy, because the animal absorbs water through its skin and does not drink with its mouth. A moist substrate gives 80-95 % humidity.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	A shallow, heavy water bowl is a good safeguard: if the substrate becomes too dry, the animal can lie in the bowl.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species is nocturnal and lives hidden underground, so it needs no special lighting and no UVB either. Strong UV light can damage the eyes and skin of amphibians.
FEEDING	Adults eat earthworms, compost worms, crickets, cockroaches and small snails. Earthworms are the best staple, because they have a good calcium-to-phosphorus ratio; cut them into pieces for small animals.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	Adults lie hidden most of the time and come out at night to hunt. The species is placid and rarely bites. Outside the breeding season they live alone, and the animals can be aggressive towards conspecifics in hides and at feeding.
NATIVE RANGE	Canada and United States.