herpy

SALAMANDERS AND NEWTS

Southern Banded Newt

Ommatotriton vittatus

Ommatotriton vittatus is a medium-sized newt of 9-11 cm from the Levant and southern Turkey. In the breeding season the male develops a tall, serrated dorsal crest and stronger colours. The species likes cool conditions, is shy, and needs a cool, humid and quiet set-up, so it is one of the more difficult newts to keep. The population in Turkey is declining, so captive-bred animals are the right choice.

Family: Salamandridae Former name: *Salamandra vittatus; Triturus vittatus* **Mild skin toxins**

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**9-11 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**8-12 years**
Active	**At dusk and at night**
Lifestyle	**Semi-aquatic**
Habitat	**Wetland and temperate woodland and meadow**
Skin toxins	**Mild** Wash your hands after contact and keep your fingers away from your eyes and mouth
Difficulty	**Experienced**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 30 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**10-18 °C**
Temperature, night	**5-12 °C**
Humidity	**80-100%**
Water	**Aquaterrarium** depth 10-20 cm
Water temperature	**8-18 °C**
UVB	**Not required**
Winter rest	**4-10 °C** 8-12 weeks
Diet	**Insects, small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies) and worms/snails**
Kept	**In pairs**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Development	**Larvae in water**
Egg-laying site	**In water**
Sexually mature	**36-48 months**
Eggs per season	**100-200**
Larval period	**60-120 days** from hatching to metamorphosis
Larval diet	**Small aquatic invertebrates (daphnia, mosquito larvae)**
Parental care	**None**

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

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

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	Little is known about keeping *Ommatotriton vittatus*.
TEMPERATURE	*Ommatotriton vittatus* likes cool conditions. The daytime temperature should be 10-18 °C and the night temperature 5-12 °C, and the temperature must not exceed 20 °C for long.
HUMIDITY AND MISTING	Keep the land section damp, with a humidity of 80-100 %, but never waterlogged. Mist the moss with dechlorinated water when it begins to dry.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	The water section should be 10-20 cm deep and 8-18 °C. Use dechlorinated tap water or rainwater. Clean water is important: change a third of the water weekly, and remove food remains daily. A small filter with a gentle flow helps.
LIGHTING AND UVB	UVB is not necessary for the species, which is active at night and at dusk and avoids sun. Ordinary daylight or LED light for 10-12 hours a day is enough. The lamp must not heat the enclosure.
FEEDING	*Ommatotriton vittatus* eats any small animal it can overpower. On land, springtails, woodlice, white worms, fruit flies and small snails and spiders are suitable, and for adults also larger woodlice and crickets.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The species is shy and does best when left in peace. Males bite and chase each other away from their territory, so two males do not belong together in a small enclosure.
NATIVE RANGE	Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Jordan.