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SALAMANDERS AND NEWTS

California Newt

Taricha torosa

Taricha torosa is a sturdy newt, 13-20 cm long, from the California coast, with a granular brown back and a yellow to orange belly. The skin contains tetrodotoxin, a nerve toxin with no antidote, and the animal can be deadly if swallowed. The species lives mostly on land and enters the water only to breed, and it must be kept cool.

Family: Salamandridae Former name: *Cynops torosus; Notophthalmus torosus* **Strong skin toxins**

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**13-20 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**12-22 years**
Active	**By day and at night**
Lifestyle	**Semi-aquatic**
Habitat	**Wetland and temperate woodland and meadow**
Skin toxins	**Strong** Avoid skin contact and wash your hands thoroughly after working in the enclosure
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**60 × 30 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 2 adults
Temperature, day	**16-21 °C**
Temperature, night	**14-18 °C**
Humidity	**70-90%**
Water	**Water dish**
UVB	**Not required**
Diet	**Insects and worms/snails**
Kept	**In pairs or in groups**

BREEDING

Reproduction	**Egg-laying**
Development	**Larvae in water**
Egg-laying site	**In water**
Sexually mature	**36 months**
Eggs per season	**7-30**
Hatching	**14-21 days**
Larval period	**60-90 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	**Near Threatened (NT)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE
There is relatively little knowledge about the care of *Taricha torosa*, so the winter temperatures are borrowed from the closely related *Taricha granulosa*, which is kept more often.

TEMPERATURE
Taricha torosa likes the cool. By day the temperature should be 16-21 °C and at night 14-18 °C. The temperature must not exceed 24 °C, and longer periods above 21 °C must be avoided.

HUMIDITY AND MISTING
The substrate should be damp, but the enclosure should not drip. Humidity is about 70-90%, and daily misting with dechlorinated water keeps the substrate moist.

WATER AND WATER QUALITY
A shallow dish of clean water must always be available, so that the animal can cover itself completely with water. Use tap water treated for chlorine and chloramine; distilled and demineralised water are not used.

LIGHTING AND UVB
The species does not need UVB. Daylight in the room or a weak fluorescent tube during the day and darkness at night is enough.

FEEDING
Taricha torosa is an opportunistic predator that takes almost anything it can overpower. Earthworms are a complete diet in themselves, and compost worms (*Eisenia fetida*) are also taken readily.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING
Taricha torosa is calm, sociable and not aggressive towards others of its kind of the same size.

NATIVE RANGE
United States.