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SALAMANDERS AND NEWTS

Italian Crested Newt

Triturus carnifex

Triturus carnifex is a robust crested newt of 12-18 cm from Italy, the southern Alps and the north-western Balkans. It has warty, dark skin and a yellow or orange belly with large, blurred black spots, and the female often has a yellow stripe along the back. In spring the male develops a tall, serrated crest. The species is hardy and easy to keep and breed.

Family: Salamandridae Former name: *Salamandra carnifex; Salamandra platycauda* **Mild skin toxins**

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**12-18 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**7-17 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	**Beginner**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**45 × 30 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 4 adults
Temperature, day	**12-20 °C**
Temperature, night	**8-15 °C**
Humidity	**70-95%**
Water	**Aquaterrarium** depth 15-30 cm
Water temperature	**10-20 °C**
UVB	**Not required**
Winter rest	**4-10 °C** 6-12 weeks
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	**12-36 months**
Eggs per season	**150-400**
Hatching	**14-35 days**
Larval period	**56-112 days** from hatching to metamorphosis
Larval diet	**Complete diet, other larvae and small aquatic invertebrates (daphnia, mosquito larvae)**
Parental care	**None**

PROTECTION AND PAPERWORK

CITES	**Not listed**
EU annex	**Not listed**
IUCN	**Vulnerable (VU)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	*Triturus carnifex* can be kept following its natural cycle with an aquatic phase and a terrestrial phase, or in water all year.
TEMPERATURE	*Triturus carnifex* loves cool conditions. The water must be kept below 25 °C, as in warmer water the animals try to leave it. The animals are fully active down to about 10 °C.
HUMIDITY AND MISTING	In the aquatic phase humidity is no problem. In the terrestrial phase the soft skin dries out quickly, so the substrate must be kept moist, with a humidity of 70-95 %.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	A water depth of 15 cm is enough, and deeper is fine: 15-30 cm gives the animals room to swim. The water is kept at 10-20 °C.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The animals are nocturnal and do not need UVB or artificial light for their own sake. The plants need light to grow, and an ordinary aquarium lamp is enough.
FEEDING	In the aquatic phase *T. carnifex* takes a wide range of food: earthworms, freshwater shrimps (*Gammarus*), bloodworms, daphnia and white worms.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	*Triturus carnifex* is robust and easy to keep. In the water the animals snap hard at anything that moves, including each other during feeding, and in the wild they also eat smaller amphibians.
NATIVE RANGE	Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina.