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SALAMANDRE E TRITONI

Chuxiong Fire-bellied Newt

Cynops cyanurus

Cynops cyanurus is a newt of 8-10 cm from Yunnan and Guizhou in south-western China. The colour ranges from dark brown to golden, the belly is yellow to orange with black spots, and a yellow or orange mark just behind the eye is characteristic of the species. It is almost entirely aquatic, tolerates ordinary room temperature and eats readily. Larvae and juveniles, however, are sensitive to cold.

Famiglia: Salamandridae Nome precedente: *Hypselotriton cyanurus* **Tossine cutanee lievi**

DATI ESSENZIALI

L'ANIMALE

Dimensioni da adulto	**8-10 cm** lunghezza totale inclusa la coda
Aspettativa di vita	**10-15 anni**
Attività	**Di giorno e di notte**
Stile di vita	**Acquatico**
Habitat	**Foresta montana e zona umida**
Tossine cutanee	**Lievi** Lavati le mani dopo il contatto e tieni le dita lontane da occhi e bocca
Difficoltà	**Intermedio**

CURA

Terrario min.	**60 × 30 × 30 cm** L × P × H per 3 adulti
Temperatura, giorno	**16-24 °C**
Temperatura, notte	**16-20 °C**
Umidità	**70-90%**
Acqua	**Acquaterrario** profondità 15-30 cm
Temperatura dell'acqua	**16-24 °C**
UVB	**Non necessari**
Alimentazione	**Insetti e vermi/lumache**
Detenzione	**In coppia o in gruppo**

RIPRODUZIONE

Riproduzione	**Ovipara**
Sviluppo	**Larve in acqua**
Luogo di deposizione	**In acqua**
Maturità sessuale	**12-24 mesi**
Uova per stagione	**100-150**
Schiusa	**21-28 giorni**
Periodo larvale	**150-180 giorni** dalla schiusa alla metamorfosi
Alimentazione delle larve	**Piccoli invertebrati acquatici (dafnie, larve di zanzara)**
Cure parentali	**Nessuna**

TUTELA E DOCUMENTI

CITES	**Non elencata**
Allegato UE	**Non elencata**
IUCN	**Vulnerabile (VU)**

La specie

Cynops cyanurus is a newt of 8-10 cm. Females are slightly larger than males, and the species is slightly larger than *Cynops orientalis* and smaller than *Cynops pyrrhogaster*. Body colour varies greatly: from dark brown through medium brown and yellow to entirely golden. An indistinct orange line often runs along the dorsal ridge. The belly is yellow to orange and often mottled with black. Wild animals are usually red-orange, while animals raised in captivity are yellow or light orange. A yellow

or orange mark just behind the eye is always present and is the clearest feature distinguishing it from *C. orientalis*. In the breeding season males develop distinct blue tones on the tail; in young males the blue may be absent, and it becomes stronger with age.

Animals in the trade belong to a group of closely related forms that also includes *Cynops chenggongensis* and *Cynops yunnanensis*, and many have been sold under the name *C. chenggongensis*. Without a known collection locality it is usually impossible to say which form an animal belongs to. An older captive line with a uniformly dark brown colour is difficult to breed: the animals are hardy and long-lived, but the offspring are delicate, with many infertile eggs and high mortality. Animals imported since about 2004 are lighter, healthy and fertile for several generations, and make up by far the majority of animals in captivity today. The advice in this care guide applies to them.

The skin has toxin glands; the toxin has not been studied for *C. cyanurus*, but as in the other *Cynops* it can irritate mucous membranes. Wash your hands before and after contact with the animals and the water, and do not touch your eyes or mouth. The animals should not be handled unless necessary. Lifespan is not documented; 10-15 years is an estimate based on related species.

Distribuzione e habitat

Cynops cyanurus occurs in Guizhou and Yunnan in south-western China, especially on the Yunnan plateau. The species lives at altitudes of 1,800-2,400 m. Very little is known about its distribution, and most descriptions are in Chinese. The species is listed as Vulnerable (IUCN: VU), partly because of loss of habitat.

> **Areale d’origine:** Cina.

HABITAT

Cynops cyanurus lives in ponds, marshes and irrigated fields on the Yunnan plateau. The plateau has a very mild climate with a monsoon and heavy rain in summer. In winter the average lowest temperature is about 2 °C, and from April to September the average highest temperature is about 24 °C. It is regarded as a species of still water without a strong current. The water temperature at individual sites is not documented.

Cura

IL TERRARIO

Cynops cyanurus is almost entirely aquatic and is kept in an aquarium. Three adults suit an aquarium of 60 × 30 × 30 cm with a water level of 25 cm, and more animals need more space. Dense planting, such as Java moss and hornwort, and hiding places of roots and stones suit the species. The bottom is bare or fine sand; gravel can be swallowed and lodge in the gut.

As with all newts, there must be an island or floating board so the animals can leave the water, but a large land area is wasted space. The species lives in still water, so a filter with a strong current is harmful; use a sponge filter or a filter with a gentle flow. The lid must be tight, because the animals escape through small openings.

TEMPERATURA

Adults thrive and breed at 21-24 °C in summer and 16-18 °C in winter, so they are well suited to an ordinary home. Healthy adults tolerate down to 10 °C and up to 27 °C briefly, but not for long at a time. At night 16-20 °C is suitable.

Eggs, larvae and juveniles are sensitive to cold: below 18 °C the eggs hatch very slowly and the larvae do not grow. Keep larvae at 20-22 °C; that may require a heater on its lowest setting. Juveniles in their first year become sluggish below 18 °C. Animals shipped with cold packs may arrive sluggish and need time to recover before being put in the water.

UMIDITÀ E NEBULIZZAZIONE

The species lives in water, so humidity is not critical. Under a tight lid it is high, about 70-90 %. Misting is not necessary. Any island or land section should be damp, but a large land area is not needed. Good ventilation under the lid prevents the air from becoming stagnant.

ACQUA E QUALITÀ DELL’ACQUA

The water level should be 15-30 cm. For three adults, 40-50 litres of water is suitable. Use dechlorinated water, change a quarter of the water weekly, and remove uneaten food. The filter should give a gentle flow; sponge filters with an air pump are well suited. The water should stay at 16-24 °C all year. Newly metamorphosed juveniles drown easily, so at first give them

5-10 cm of water, increased as they grow.

ILLUMINAZIONE E UVB

The species does not need special lighting, and UVB is not necessary. Ordinary aquarium lighting that suits the plants is enough, and the days are shortened in winter.

Leggi di più: Luce e UVB

ALIMENTAZIONE

The species is a very good eater and takes almost anything suitable that moves. Offer chopped earthworms, blackworms, bloodworms, daphnia and white worms. Most adults can be trained to take soft carnivore pellets, such as salmon pellets or shrimp pellets, and eat them with great appetite. Variety is important.

Adults are fed two to three times a week. Remove uneaten food.

COMPORTAMENTO E MANIPOLAZIONE

The species is calm and can be kept in a group. Make sure every animal is eating. Adults eat eggs and small larvae of their own species, so the offspring are kept separately. Newly metamorphosed juveniles spend some time on land, but quickly learn to look for food in the water.

Riproduzione

MATURITÀ SESSUALE E SESSAGGIO

In the breeding season males are recognised by the blue tones on the tail and are slightly smaller than females. The animals become sexually mature after 1-2 years, and young animals may begin to breed less than a year after metamorphosis.

ACCOPPIAMENTO

Breeding succeeds easily if the animals are given a summer and a cool winter: 21-24 °C in summer and 16-18 °C in winter. The breeding season extends from early spring through the whole summer and into autumn. Courtship is similar to that of other *Cynops*: the male displays to the female and fans his tail, deposits a spermatophore on the bottom and lures the female across it so that she picks it up with her cloaca. Fertile eggs are often found in an aquarium where no courtship has been seen and the males do not appear to be in breeding dress; the males can probably mate outside the season.

UOVA E LARVE

The female lays her eggs singly on plants and other surfaces in the water. A well-fed female lays more than 100 eggs in a season. A large share of the eggs may be infertile, but this is offset by the large number. The eggs hatch after 3-4 weeks at 20-22 °C; if the water is cooler than 18 °C, it takes much longer. Move the eggs to a separate container, because the adults eat them.

The larvae can vary greatly in colour, from almost black to almost white. They are predators and take only live food: first newly hatched brine shrimp and microworms, later daphnia, white worms and blackworms. The larvae eat large amounts of food in a day and become plump. Keep the larvae in water at 20-22 °C, and sort them by size so the large ones do not eat the small ones.

METAMORFOSI

From hatching to metamorphosis takes 5-6 months, longer than in the other *Cynops*. The larvae are therefore often large at metamorphosis, sometimes over 5 cm. The gills are resorbed, and the animal begins to go on land. Newly metamorphosed juveniles are still semi-aquatic: they come out of the water a little, but quickly learn to enter the water when food is offered there. Provide a floating board or an island so they can climb out.

ALLEVAMENTO DEI PICCOLI

Keep juveniles in 5-10 cm of water at first, and increase the depth as they grow. Keep them at 18 °C or above, because in their first year they are sensitive to cold. Feed them daily with small live food, such as white worms, daphnia, blackworms and chopped earthworms, according to size. Sort the animals by size, and keep them apart from the adults.

Salute ed errori comuni

Cynops cyanurus is hardy as long as the water is clean and suitably warm. The typical problems are:

- Cold in larvae and juveniles: below 18 °C the larvae do not grow and the juveniles become sluggish.
- Prolonged heat above 27 °C, which stresses the animals and makes them prone to infection.
- Poor water quality, with fungal and bacterial skin infections, often after uneaten food.
- Gut blockage after swallowing gravel.
- Drowning of newly metamorphosed juveniles in water that is too deep.

The fungus *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* (Bsal) is fatal to many salamanders, and Asian salamanders can carry it without showing signs themselves. Quarantine new animals for several weeks, give each aquarium its own equipment, and clean hands and tools between aquariums. Never release animals or water into the wild. Contact a vet with amphibian experience if an animal wastes away, develops sores or white patches, swells up or behaves unusually.

Leggi di più: Quarantena e igiene

Chiedi sempre a chi se ne intende

Questa guida è un buon punto di partenza, ma non può sostituire l'esperienza. Gli animali sono diversi uno dall'altro, e gran parte di ciò che conta di più si impara da chi alleva la specie da anni. Parla con un allevatore, un detentore esperto o un veterinario che conosca rettili e anfibi prima di prendere l'animale - e di nuovo se qualcosa non ti convince.