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SALAMANDERS AND NEWTS

Chinese Fire-bellied Newt

Cynops orientalis

Cynops orientalis is a small, slender aquatic newt of 6-10 cm with a black back and a bright orange to red belly with black spots. The species comes from eastern China, prefers cold, calm water and is one of the most common salamanders in aquariums. It is easy to care for when the water is kept cool, and the female lays the eggs singly in the leaves of aquatic plants.

Family: Salamandridae Former name: *Hypselotriton orientalis; Triturus orientalis* Published 16 November 2026 **Mild skin toxins**

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**6-10 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**10-15 years**
Active	**By day and at night**
Lifestyle	**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	**60 × 30 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 3 adults
Temperature, day	**14-20 °C**
Temperature, night	**12-18 °C**
Humidity	**70-90%**
Water	**Aquaterrarium** depth 15-25 cm
Water temperature	**14-20 °C**
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	**12-36 months**
Eggs per season	**10-236**
Hatching	**13-24 days** at 15-23 °C
Larval period	**90-150 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	**Not Evaluated (NE)**

Care at a glance

THE ENCLOSURE	An aquarium of 60 × 30 × 30 cm (about 50 litres) is enough for a pair or a small group of three adults. Larger is better, especially if the animals are kept in a group.
TEMPERATURE	The water must be kept at 14-20 °C. The species tolerates up to 25 °C briefly in summer without signs of discomfort, but temperatures above 23 °C should be avoided, and above 26 °C must not occur.
HUMIDITY AND MISTING	The species lives almost entirely in water, so the humidity above the water is not critical and has not been measured for the species. Under a tight lid with a land area it is high, about 70-90 %.
WATER AND WATER QUALITY	The water level is 15-25 cm. This provides enough depth to swim and a cool body of water, but the animals must always have easy access to a land area. The water must be clean, and the temperature 14-20 °C.
LIGHTING AND UVB	The species does not need any particular lighting, and UVB is not necessary. Ordinary aquarium light is only necessary if the aquarium has live plants, and it must not make the water warmer.
FEEDING	The species is not fussy and eats anything that moves. The diet is based on earthworms, brine shrimp and thawed bloodworms. Vary with freshwater shrimp, tubifex, waxworm larvae and live mosquito larvae.
BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING	The species is active, and the animals can be kept together in pairs or small groups. During feeding they become strongly food-motivated and may bite each other's limbs and tails.
NATIVE RANGE	China.