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SALAMANDERS AND NEWTS

Alpine Newt

Ichthyosaura alpestris

Ichthyosaura alpestris is an attractive European newt with an orange belly and, in the breeding season, a blue male with black-spotted sides. It reaches 8-12 cm, lives alternately in water and on land, and is relatively easy to keep and breed in a cool aquarium or aquaterrarium.

Family: Salamandridae Former name: *Mesotriton alpestris; Triturus alpestris* Published 16 November 2026 **Mild skin toxins**

KEY FACTS

THE ANIMAL

Adult size	**8-12 cm** total length incl. tail
Lifespan	**10-20 years**
Active	**At dusk and at night**
Lifestyle	**Semi-aquatic**
Habitat	**Temperate woodland and meadow**
Skin toxins	**Mild** Wash your hands after contact and keep your fingers away from your eyes and mouth
Difficulty	**Intermediate**

CARE

Min. enclosure	**70 × 35 × 30 cm** L × W × H for 4 adults
Temperature, day	**10-18 °C**
Temperature, night	**8-14 °C**
Humidity	**80-100%**
Water	**Aquaterrarium** depth 20-25 cm
UVB	**Not required**
Winter rest	**2-5 °C** 8-13 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	**12-48 months**
Eggs per season	**30-200**
Clutches per year	**1**
Hatching	**10-30 days**
Larval period	**60-180 days** from hatching to metamorphosis
Larval diet	**Other larvae and 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

The species can be kept in an aquarium, in an aquaterrarium with both water and land, or in water all year round. An aquarium of 70 × 35 × 30 cm suits two pairs in the aquatic phase.

TEMPERATURE

Ichthyosaura alpestris is a cool-climate species. In both the water and the land section, the temperature should be 10-18 °C by day and 8-14 °C at night, and it must never exceed 23 °C.

HUMIDITY AND MISTING

The air in the land section must be humid, about 80-100 %, and 90-100 % during the winter rest. The animals' soft skin dries out easily, so there must always be water or a damp hide.

WATER AND WATER QUALITY

The water must have a neutral pH and be dechlorinated. Use a dechlorinator, or let the water stand for a day in an open bucket. The water depth is at least 20 cm. Water quality is not critical as long as the water is clean.

LIGHTING AND UVB

The species does not need UVB. Daylight from a window is enough, but the aquarium must not stand in direct sun. If there are plants, a plant light tube on a timer can give them light and give the animals a regular daily rhythm.

FEEDING

Ichthyosaura alpestris is voracious and eats almost anything that fits into its mouth.

BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

The species is crepuscular and nocturnal and is most lively in the water in spring. It can be kept in pairs or in groups, and males can with advantage be kept together, because the competition promotes breeding.

NATIVE RANGE

Spain, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany, Denmark, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, Czechia, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, North Macedonia, Greece, Romania and Ukraine.