herpy

SALAMANDERS AND NEWTS

## Smooth newt

# *Lissotriton vulgaris*

*Lissotriton vulgaris* is a small, adaptable newt of 8-11 cm that spends most of the year on land and enters the water only to breed. In spring the male develops a wavy dorsal crest and strong colours. The species is hardy in a cool aquaterrarium with a winter rest, and it readily lays eggs, so the whole life cycle can be followed.

Family: Salamandridae  English name: Smooth Newt  Former name: *Triturus vulgaris*  Published 16 November 2026  **Mild skin toxins**

KEY FACTS

### THE ANIMAL

| | |
|---|---|
| Adult size | **8-11 cm**<br>total length incl. tail |
| Weight | **0.3-5.2 g** |
| Lifespan | **4-14 years** |
| Active | **At dusk and at night** |
| Lifestyle | **Semi-aquatic** |
| Habitat | **Wetland and temperate woodland and meadow** |
| Skin toxins | **Mild**<br>Wash your hands after contact and keep your fingers away from your eyes and mouth |
| Difficulty | **Intermediate** |

### CARE

| | |
|---|---|
| Min. enclosure | **60 × 30 × 30 cm**<br>L × W × H for 4 adults |
| Temperature, day | **12-20 °C** |
| Temperature, night | **8-15 °C** |
| Humidity | **80-100%** |
| Water | **Aquaterrarium**<br>depth 10-20 cm |
| Water temperature | **10-20 °C** |
| UVB | **Not required** |
| Winter rest | **5-10 °C**<br>8-12 weeks |
| Diet | **Insects, small invertebrates (springtails, fruit flies) and worms/snails** |
| Kept | **In pairs or in groups** |

### BREEDING

| | |
|---|---|
| Reproduction | **Egg-laying** |
| Development | **Larvae in water** |
| Egg-laying site | **In water** |
| Sexually mature | **24-36 months** |
| Eggs per season | **100-500** |
| Hatching | **8-35 days** |
| Larval period | **42-120 days**<br>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 | **Least Concern (LC)** |

## Care at a glance

**THE ENCLOSURE**
Adults need both a water section and a land section. An aquaterrarium of 60 × 30 × 30 cm suits up to 4 adults, and larger is better: more water surface gives the animals room in the breeding season.

**TEMPERATURE**
*Lissotriton vulgaris* is cool-loving. The daytime temperature is 12-20 °C and the night-time temperature 8-15 °C.

**HUMIDITY AND MISTING**
The soft skin dries out quickly, so the land section must be kept damp, with a humidity of 80-100 %.

**WATER AND WATER QUALITY**
The water section must be 10-20 cm deep and 10-20 °C. Use dechlorinated tap water, tap water that has stood for a few days, or rainwater; the species is not fussy about pH, but chlorine is harmful.

**LIGHTING AND UVB**
UVB is not necessary for the species, which lives hidden and is active at dusk and at night. The animals avoid sun.

**FEEDING**
*Lissotriton vulgaris* eats all small animals it can swallow. On land, adults are given small earthworms, small slugs, woodlice, white worms, aphids, fruit flies and small crickets.

**BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING**
The species is peaceful and can be kept in pairs or in groups with more females than males. In the breeding season the males pursue the females, so more females than males, many plants and good hides give peace.

**NATIVE RANGE**
Ireland, United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Kazakhstan.