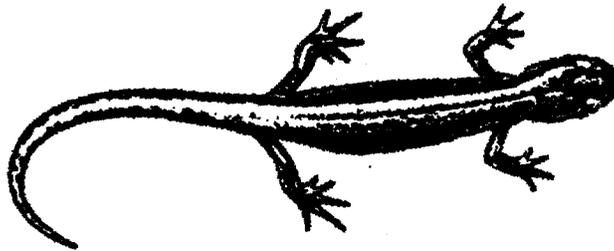


Long-toed Salamander

Ambystoma macrodactylum
Family Ambystomatidae



Global Rank: G5

State Rank: S2 (AK); S3 (CA);
S5 (ID, MT, OR, WA)

Distribution: From southeastern Alaska south along the coast to central Oregon and inland to the Rocky Mountains of Idaho and western Montana. Also found further south in the Sierra Nevada of California to Lake Tahoe. It ranges from near sea level to about 10,000 ft. (3,000 m.) in elevation. At least four subspecies have been identified and a relict population may exist in Santa Cruz County, California.

Description: Adult long-toed salamanders reach up to 6.25 in. (16 cm.) in total length. Key characteristics are a tan, yellow, or olive-green dorsal stripe and elongated fourth toe of hind feet. The stripe often has irregular borders and a series of spots. There may be a sprinkling of fine white flecks on the sides. Belly coloration is usually dark brown or sooty. Larvae reach up to 3.1 in. (8 cm.) in total length. Key characteristics are long, feathery, external gills, may be visible only in water, 9-12 gill rakers, and uniform dorsal coloration.



Current range of the long-toed salamander

Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Boise, ID.

Reproduction: Adults begin migrating to the breeding waters after fall rains, and remain active most of the winter. Breeding can occur as early as January and February at low elevations and from April to July in the mountains. Clutch size is often larger at lower elevations, but can vary from 85 to 411 eggs. Eggs may be laid singly or in clusters of 5 to 100 and either attached to objects or loose on substrate. In colder areas, larvae may overwinter and transform to adults the next summer or fall.

Food: Adults eat terrestrial and aquatic invertebrates, including insects, insect larvae, spiders, slugs, earthworms, and amphipods. Larvae feed on zooplankton, immature insects, aquatic snails and probably other salamander larvae.

Habits: Adult long-toed salamanders are subterranean, except during the breeding season, and search for prey under surface objects such as rotting logs, bark, and rocks. They usually are near water and are usually active at night. They both hibernate and aestivate to avoid periods of cold or hot weather. Predators of adults are mainly garter snakes and bullfrogs; larvae are mainly preyed upon by aquatic insects and garter snakes.

Management Implications: This is the most common and widespread species of *Ambystoma* in the Northwest.

Important References: Stebbins, R.C. 1985. A field guide to western reptiles and amphibians. The Peterson Field Guide Series, Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, NY; Csuti, B., A.J. Kimerling, T.A. O'Neil, M.M. Shaughnessy, E.P. Gaines, and M.M.P. Huso. 1997. Atlas of Oregon wildlife. Oregon State University Press, Corvallis, OR; Groves, C.R., B. Butterfield, A. Lippincott, B. Csuti, and J.M. Scott. 1997. Atlas of Idaho's wildlife.