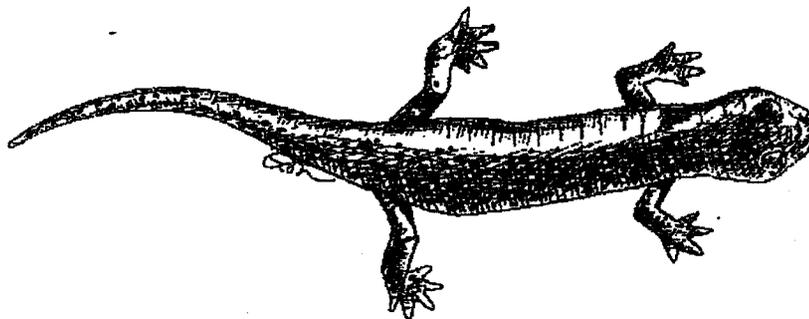


# Mount Lyell Salamander

*Hydromantes platycephalus*  
Family Plethodontidae



**Global Rank:** G4

**State Rank:** S3S4 (CA)

**Distribution:** Found in Sierra Nevada from Sierra Buttes, Sierra County, to Franklin Pass area, Tulane County, Twin Lakes, Silliman Gap, Sequoia National Park, and Mount Williamson, California. Low-altitude records are from the upper edge of the talus slopes on the south side of Yosemite Valley. Elevations range from 4,000 ft. (1,220 m.) to 12,000 ft. (3,660 m.).

**Description:** Adults reach about 3 in. (10.5 cm.) in total length. Has a flattened head and body, a granite-matching coloration, blunt webbed toes, and a short tail. It is dusky below, flecked with white. Usually 1/2 to 1 1/2 costal folds between adpressed limbs. Young have black color above, overlain with a greenish tinge.

**Reproduction:** Breeding season is unknown. The peak is thought to be May and June depending on the year. Both clutch size and nest sites are unknown.



*Current range of the  
Mount Lyell salamander*

**Food:** Feeds on insects and spiders found under surfaces.

**Habits:** Found in wet areas (springs and seeps), under large granite slabs and boulders at the base of talus slopes. Typical habitat includes rock fissures, seepages from streams and melting snow, shade, and low-growing plants. Active from late spring to fall. Seems to prefer north-facing slopes.

**Management Implications:** A fragile species; total population relatively small and composed of scattered local populations. Thought to be a relic of a once widespread species in past Sierra glacial periods.

**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; Verner, J., and A.S. Boss. 1980. California wildlife and their habitats. USDA Pacific Southwest Forest and Range Experiment Station, GTR PSW-37, Berkeley, CA.