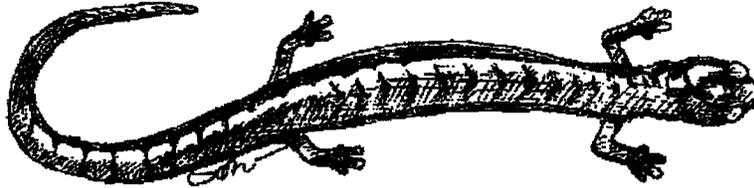


Relictual Slender Salamander

Batrachoseps relictus
Family Plethodontidae



Global Rank: G2

State Rank: S2? (CA)

Distribution: Range is fragmented within the southern Sierra Nevada of California from the Merced River Canyon, Tuolumne County, south. Reaches from near sea level to about 8,000 ft. (2,440 m.) in elevation. Classification and distribution of several central California slender salamanders is still being studied. For this report, the relictual slender salamander is substituted for the Pacific slender salamander referred to in Stebbins (1985).

Description: Adults reach up to 2 3/4 in. (6.9 cm.) in snout-vent length. The species "group" varies widely in size, proportions, and coloration. There is no known overall structural or color characteristic or group of characteristics that will distinguish this species from other slender salamanders in the region. Overall, there are 16 to 21 costal grooves, 5 1/2 to 13 costal folds between toes of adpressed limbs, and tails vary from less than to about two times the snout-vent length.

Reproduction: Breeding habits largely unknown. Eggs are laid in moist places under



*Current range of the
relictual slender salamander*

surface objects from May to July. Peak activity probably is in June. Mean clutch size is 4 (range 1 to 12).

Food: Feeds on small insects and other invertebrates which it searches for under surface objects.

Habits: Prefers mountain meadows, but also found in ponderosa pine, black oak woodland, riparian deciduous, and mixed-conifer types. Also has been found in grassland and chaparral types and along washes, in salt marshes, and under beach driftwood.

Management Implications: Common in preferred habitat. First described in 1968, and little information on life history is known. Not thought to be territorial. Home ranges suspected to be about a half acre.

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: western Sierra Nevada. USDA Pacific Southwest Forest and Range Experiment Station, GTR PSW-37, Berkeley, CA.