



Salamanders are amphibians. They live in moist places and have smooth, damp skin that helps them to breathe. If you find a salamander, that's good news! It means *the environment is clean and healthy*. Salamanders also keep bugs like mosquitoes and beetles in check and in turn serve as food for animals like owls, turtles, songbirds, and bears. Not to mention, *they add more color and wonder to our world!*

Happy Year of the Salamander!

www.yearofthesalamander.org



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Prepared by MacKenzie Hall,
Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ



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Hello! I'm a:

Red-spotted Newt

Scientific name:

Notophthalmus v. viridescens

Size: up to 5" long

Lifespan: 12-15 years

Look closely (and step carefully!) on rainy days – that's when I like to crawl through the forest hunting for things to eat, like bugs, worms, and slugs. My bright orange skin isn't the greatest camouflage, but that's OK. It warns other animals that I'm no treat to eat. So while most salamanders prefer to hide, I'm out in the open and not very shy...and you get to say "hi!"

When you see a Newt like me on land, that means it's a youngster (called an "eft"). When I'm grown, my skin will turn olive-green in color, my tail will flatten like a fish's fin, and I'll move into the water to start the cycle of life all over again.



© Adrienne N. Lopez

Hello! I'm a:

Mudpuppy

Scientific name:

Necturus maculosus

Size: 8-13" long

Lifespan: 10+ years

Ruff! Some people call me "waterdog" because of my squeaky bark. Did you know that most salamanders have no voice at all? That's ruff! I spend my whole life underwater in streams, lakes, and ponds. See those feathery gills behind my head? I breathe with them like fish do. Keep the water clean for us, ok?

Though I'm one of the biggest salamanders in the world, most people will never see a Mudpuppy like me. There are bigger animals on the prowl, you see. So I hide all day and come out at night to hunt for things to eat, like crayfish, snails, and other small water creatures.



© Pierson Hill

Hello! I'm an: Eastern

Red-backed Salamander

Scientific name:

Plethodon cinereus

Size: up to 4" long

Lifespan: 10-25 years

Have you ever been in the woods? Of course you have! Then you and I have definitely crossed paths. We "red-backs" are one of the most common animals in the forest. But we don't sing like birds or scurry like squirrels. We live quietly under fallen leaves and logs, where it's damp and dark and safe from harm.

We live on land our whole lives long, from the time we're tiny eggs. Some of us are born all gray (called "lead-backs") and some of us have...well...red backs. Want to know something else cool? We breathe through our skin; we have no lungs at all! Next time you're in the woods, send a friendly vibe. I'll be nearby!



© George Cevera

Hello! I'm a:

Spotted Salamander

Scientific name:

Ambystoma maculatum

Size: 5-9" long

Lifespan: up to 30 years

We Spotted Salamanders are some of the biggest, flashiest, most abundant salamanders in the woods, but most people will never see one of us. Our lives are spent like moles, underground in small burrows or under the leaves and logs. But we come out at night to eat worms, slugs, millipedes, and bugs.

At the first hint of spring, during warm nighttime rains, we're ready to migrate! The ground erupts with thousands like me as we journey to small wooded pools to breed. But these days, many must cross roads to get there. Roads spell trouble for small, slow creatures. If you see me out there, please hit the brakes! I've got eggs to lay!



© Kevin Jamieson

Hello! I'm an: Eastern

Tiger Salamander

Scientific name:

Ambystoma tigrinum

Size: 6-12" long

Lifespan: up to 16 years

Tiger is the perfect name for me, and not just because of my yellow & black stripes. I'm a big "cat" - the biggest salamander to walk the land! But in the animal kingdom, there's always somebody bigger around...so I live most of my life underground. I'm fossorial.

In the wintertime when you're bundled up at home, we Tigers roam. We slip beneath the ice to lay our eggs in shallow grassy waters called vernal pools. By spring, our youngsters are hatched, swimming, and breathing through feathery gills. We need clean water and healthy forests to survive (like all amphibians do). Will you do your best to protect the land & water...and us?



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When you see a Newt like me on land, that means it's a youngster (called an "eft"). When I'm grown, my skin will turn olive-green in color, my tail will flatten like a fish's fin, and I'll move into the water to start the cycle of life all over again.



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Hello! I'm a:

Mudpuppy

Scientific name:

Necturus maculosus

Size: 8-13" long

Lifespan: 10+ years

Ruff! Some people call me “waterdog” because of my squeaky bark. Did you know that most salamanders have no voice at all? That’s *ruff!* I spend my *whole life* underwater in streams, lakes, and ponds. See those feathery gills behind my head? I breathe with them like fish do. Keep the water clean for us, ok?

Though I’m one of the *biggest salamanders* in the world, most people will never see a Mudpuppy like me. There are bigger animals on the prowl, you see. So I hide all day and come out at night to hunt for things to eat, like crayfish, snails, and other small water creatures.



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Hello! I'm an: Eastern
Red-backed Salamander

Scientific name:

Plethodon cinereus

Size: up to 4" long

Lifespan: 10-25 years

Have you ever been in the woods? Of course you have! Then you and I have definitely crossed paths. We "red-backs" are one of the *most common animals in the forest*. But we don't sing like birds or scurry like squirrels. We live quietly under fallen leaves and logs, where it's damp and dark and safe from harm.

We live on land our whole lives long, from the time we're tiny eggs. Some of us are born all gray (called "lead-backs") and some of us have...well...*red* backs. Want to know something else cool? *We breathe through our skin*; we have no lungs at all! Next time you're in the woods, send a friendly vibe. *I'll be nearby!*



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Hello! I'm a:

Spotted Salamander

Scientific name:

Ambystoma maculatum

Size: 5-9" long

Lifespan: up to 30 years

We Spotted Salamanders are some of the biggest, flashiest, most *abundant salamanders* in the woods, but most people will never see one of us. Our lives are spent like moles, underground in small burrows or under the leaves and logs. But we come out at night to eat worms, slugs, millipedes, and bugs.

At the first hint of spring, during warm nighttime rains, we're ready to migrate! The ground erupts with *thousands like me as we journey to small wooded pools to breed*. But these days, many must cross roads to get there. Roads spell trouble for small, slow creatures. If you see me out there, *please hit the brakes!* I've got eggs to lay!



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In the wintertime when you're bundled up at home, we Tigers roam. We slip beneath the ice to lay our eggs in shallow grassy waters called vernal pools. By spring, our youngsters are hatched, swimming, and breathing through feathery gills. We need clean water and healthy forests to survive (like all amphibians do). Will you do your best to protect the land & water...and us?



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Tiger is the perfect name for me, and not just because of my yellow & black stripes. I'm a big "cat" - the biggest salamander to walk the land! But in the animal kingdom, there's always somebody bigger around...so I live most of my life underground. I'm *fossorial*.

In the wintertime when you're bundled up at home, we Tigers roam. We slip beneath the ice to lay our eggs in shallow grassy waters called vernal pools. By spring, our youngsters are hatched, swimming, and breathing through feathery gills. We need clean water and healthy forests to survive (like all amphibians do). Will you do your best to protect the land & water...and us?



© Kevin Jamieson

Hello! I'm an: Eastern
Tiger Salamander

Scientific name:
Ambystoma tigrinum

Size: 6-12" long

Lifespan: up to 16 years

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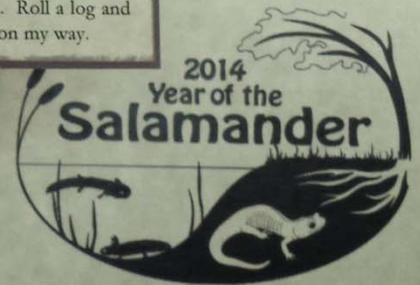


Photo © Pierson Hill

Hello! I'm a:
Redback Salamander
Scientific name:
Plethodon cinereus
Size: up to 4" long
Lifespan: 10-25 years

Have you ever been in the woods? Of course you have! Then you and I have definitely crossed paths. We Redbacks are one of the *most common animals in the forest*. But we don't sing like birds or scurry like squirrels. We live quietly under fallen leaves and logs, where it's damp and dark and safe from harm.

We live on land our whole long lives long, from the time we're tiny eggs. Some of us are born all gray (called "leadbacks") and some of us have...well...red backs. Want to know something else cool? *We breathe through our skin*; we have no lungs at all. Roll a log and Then be polite, and leave me on my way.



2014
Year of the
Salamander

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We Spotted Salamander is the funkiest, most colorful of my yellow kingdom. We live mostly under the leaf litter and eat worms.

Ruff! Some people say we have no voice, but we have an underwater feathery gill like fish do. Though we can't breathe through our skin, we can breathe through our gills.

Look closely at that's when I can be found. My bright colors are a warning but that's not why I'm here. I'm here to eat. So don't eat me!