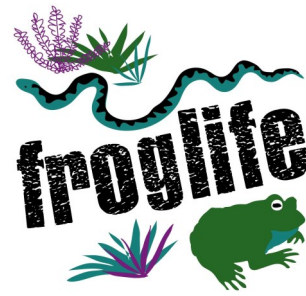


SMOOTH NEWT

(*Lissotriton vulgaris*)



Identification:

- Adults up to 10 cm in length.
- Skin is varying shades of grey or brown.
- Males develop a wavy crest along the back during the breeding season.
- Belly yellow or orange, usually with black spots and/or blotches.
- Throat is spotted.



Photo: Mark Zekhuis

Distribution:

- Native species.
- Common and widespread throughout the UK including Ireland: the UK's most widespread newt species.
- Found throughout south and central Europe.

Ecology:

- Most active at dusk and dawn.
- Feed on a wide variety of invertebrates.



Photo: Silviu Petrovan

Lifecycle:

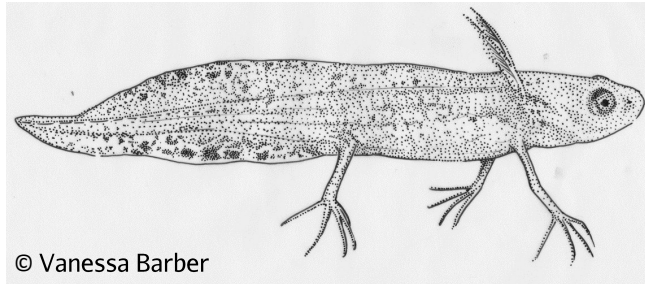
- Emerge from overwintering sites in early spring and head to a pond to breed.
- Males perform a courtship dance to attract females.
- Females deposit eggs between March and June.
- After 2-4 weeks larvae emerge from eggs.



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- Efts (terrestrial juveniles) emerge from the water in summer.
- During summer adults spend time in the water hunting frog tadpoles.
- Winter is spent under rocks, in compost heaps or buried in mud at the bottom of ponds.
- Individuals may take advantage of milder weather to forage.



Eggs and larvae:

- Very difficult to distinguish Smooth Newt eggs from Palmate Newt eggs. Greyish-brown or dirty white eggs surrounded by a transparent jelly capsule that is about 3 mm across.
- Eggs deposited individually on leaves of aquatic plants.
- Very difficult to distinguish Smooth Newt larvae from Palmate Newt larvae. Light beige or brown, sometimes with fine black speckling.
- Larvae reach 30 - 40mm before metamorphosis.



Predators and other threats:

- Predators include fish, Grass Snakes, ducks and kingfishers.
- Larvae eaten by water beetles, dragonfly nymphs, fish and adult newts.
- Threatened by loss of habitat and reduced habitat connectivity.



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