

Jefferson Salamander

Jefferson Salamander (*Ambystoma jeffersonianum*) - Pl.21

Identification: 4 1/4" - 8 1/4". Ground color of this slender salamander is dark brown or gray; the underside is lighter than the sides. The limbs and lower sides of the body are usually marked by tiny bluish-gray speckles. These speckles are bright on young individuals, but fade with age. The Jefferson Salamander closely resembles the Blue-spotted Salamander, but the Jefferson Salamander has a gray area around the vent while the Blue-spotted has a black area around the vent. Also, the snout is wider and extends further forward in the Jefferson Salamander than in the Blue-spotted Salamander.

Where to find them: The Jefferson Salamander breeds in vernal pools located in upland deciduous forests.

When to find them: Breeds in late winter and early spring.

Range: Northern Region: Sussex, Warren, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, and Bergen Counties.

Note: The Jefferson and Blue-spotted Salamanders hybridize over most of the Northern Region. Within this area, colors and patterns may vary greatly among hybrids and their parents, and definite identification to either species is extremely difficult. The Audubon guide, although inaccurate in the description of the hybrids' breeding biology, has good examples of how some of these hybrids might look (see plates for Tremblay's Salamander and Silvery Salamander). Genetic analysis is the only method that can definitively distinguish hybrids.

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Key Features

- Long toes and body with a gray to dark brown base color.
- Belly paler than sides.
- Juveniles may have blueish-white flecks on body.



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Excerpt from: "Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of New Jersey"
Order the complete guide at - <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/products.htm>