

Red-spotted Newt

Red-spotted Newt (*Notophthalmus viridescens viridescens*) - PL.23

Identification: 2 1/4" - 5 1/2". The Red-spotted Newt has several different life forms, including an aquatic larval stage, an intermediate terrestrial stage called the red eft, and an aquatic adult stage. Occasionally, adults may be found on land, particularly if their home pond has dried up. Rarely, individuals in some populations may skip the red eft stage; these adults will still have external gills. In every stage, there are red spots thinly edged with black along the sides of the back. Ground color in the aquatic adult varies from yellowish brown to olive to greenish brown, with scattered small black spots. The tail in the aquatic adult is flattened vertically, giving it the appearance of an elongated boat rudder. The red eft varies from bright orange to dull red, with a fainter scattering of black spots. This bright coloration warns predators of the toxins in the skin. The tail of the red eft is rounded.

Where to find them: The aquatic adult prefers relatively calm, unpolluted waters, while in the eft stage this species can be found in moist wooded uplands.

When to find them: The red eft is plentiful after summer showers. The aquatic adult can be observed all year round in aquatic habitats.

Range: Entire state.

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Key Features

- Aquatic adults are normally an olive-green color and have tails that are flattened vertically.
- Red efts vary in color from bright orange to a dull red and have round tails.
- Individuals can have up to 21 red spots in any stage.



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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>