



Photo by Joshua Ream



Photo from discovermagazine.com

DISTRIBUTION

Rough skinned Newts occur along the Pacific Coast from Southeast Alaska through western Canada, to California. They have been reported on the mainland of Southeast Alaska as far north as Juneau, and in the Alexander Archipelago on Admiralty Island, nearby Shelter Island, and many of the islands south of Frederick Sounds. Newts have been seen on Bamdoroshni Island in Sitka Sounds, but their occurrence there may be the result of a transplant in about 1980 from Ketchikan stock (J. Whitman, pers. com., 2003). Newts on the mainland near Juneau are transplants from Shelter Island in the 1960s. The presence of this species farther north along the Gulf Coast to perhaps as far west as Cook Inlet has not been adequately documented and may be in error.

(Information cited: www.alaskaherps.info / S. O. MacDonald)



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ALASKA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The Alaska Herpetological Society is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the field of Herpetology in the State of Alaska. Our mission is to promote sound research and management of amphibians and reptiles in the North and to provide opportunities in outreach, education, and citizen science for individuals who are interested in these species.

WEB:

WWW.AKHERPSOCIETY.ORG

FACEBOOK:

ALASKA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

ROUGH-SKINNED NEWT

Taricha granulosa



Photo by Joshua Ream

INFORMATION

This information on the Rough-skinned Newt (*Taricha granulosa*) has been provided by the Alaska Herpetological Society.

You can help locate this species on our website, via a voucher or via the epicollect app. See www.akherpsociety.org for more information.

Rough-skinned Newt Information

ADULT

Adults are 13.3-20cm (5-25 in) long (total length - nose to tip of tale). "Rough" look to skin (except for breeding male), orange/yellow on underside, does not have clearly visible grooves along body like northwestern and long-toed salamander.

LARVAE

Larvae reach 7.5cm (3 in); trunk has two rows of spots that run the length of the body (in some cases form a light stripe).

EGGS

Eggs are laid singly, eggs are in large single gelatinous envelope, large capsular chamber; they are usually attached to vegetation in slow-moving streams or still water; usually hard to find, sometimes attached between parts of vegetation.

FACTS

The most aquatic newt! This animal is found in spruce and hemlock forests around ponds or lakes, muskegs, and slow moving streams that have large amounts of vegetation.

These animals are diurnal - they are most active during the day. The metamorphosis from larvae to adult is thought to take two years in Alaska.

Among the most notable characteristics in adults is the red / orange belly.

Newts defend themselves by possessing a potent neurotoxin. Their toxic properties are not confined to their skin secretions but are widespread throughout the body. Ingestion of newt tissue can cause death in most animals, including man, if eaten in sufficient quantity. Sexual maturity may take 4-5 years, and

individuals have been known to live up to 26 years.



Photo from www.californiaherps.com

HANDLING AMPHIBIANS

It is actually illegal in the State of Alaska to handle or remove Native amphibians from their habitat without a scientific collection permit.

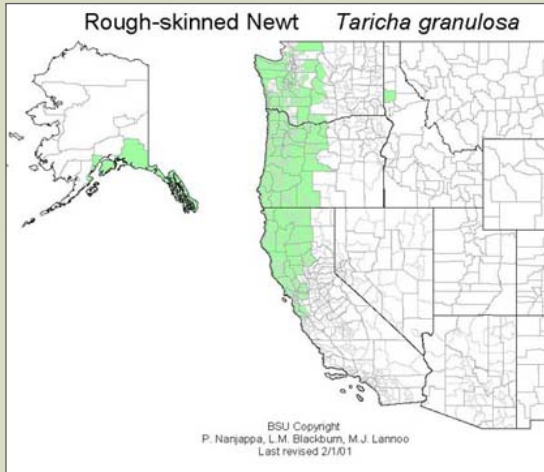
Handling them can increase the spread of disease and allows deadly chemicals like bug spray and sunscreen to easily penetrate their permeable skin. Removing them can hurt populations and change their genetic structure. Never move amphibians from place to place.

When possible, scrub boots, waders, nets and other equipment with a 5% bleach solution between sites or when you return home. This helps to stop the spread of diseases like chytrid fungus which has been identified in Alaska and can cause mass amphibian mortality.

Also, never release a pet amphibian into the wild!



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DID YOU KNOW...

That swallowing a Rough-skinned Newt can kill a man? It is actually energetically costly for newts to produce toxins. For this reason they have been found to be less toxic in Alaska where one of their major predators, the Garter Snake, is not a substantial threat. It is said that some Native American groups along the Pacific Northwest Coast may have poisoned their enemies with chemicals derived from these animals! Despite their decreased potency further north, they still have the capacity to do major harm, so please don't lick or eat them!