

California Wildlife Habitat Relationships System
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
California Interagency Wildlife Task Group

ROUGH-SKINNED NEWT

Taricha granulosa

Family: SALAMANDRIDAE
A006

Order: CAUDATA

Class: AMPHIBIA

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DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE, AND SEASONALITY

The rough-skinned newt ranges from the Oregon border south to Santa Cruz and central Santa Clara cos., inland to the Siskiyou Mountains, and southward on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada to near Chico, Butte Co. Its elevational range extends up to 2130 m (7000 ft) (Riemer 1958). Spends much of the year in ponds, lakes, sloughs and slow-moving streams. Favored terrestrial habitats include riparian, Douglas fir, redwood, montane hardwood-conifer, valley-foothill hardwood and hardwood-conifer. Abundance at breeding sites (in water) may far exceed that during the rest of the year.

SPECIFIC HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

Feeding: Searches along bottom of streams, ponds and lakes and in various terrestrial habitats for a wide range of invertebrates.

Cover: In water may seek cover within soft organic bottoms or within aquatic vegetation. On land, this species seeks cover under stumps, logs and stones.

Reproduction: Requires slow-moving streams, lakes, or ponds, usually permanent, for courtship and egg-laying.

Water: This species is more aquatic than other *Taricha* species. Permanently aquatic populations have been observed in San Mateo County (Riemer 1958).

Pattern: Stream or pond in proximity to woodlands or forest provides best habitat.

SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

Activity Patterns: Daily patterns vary in different areas. May hibernate during the cold season.

Seasonal Movements/Migration: During the fall, adults may leave the water to wander on land where they may eventually hibernate beneath surface litter, logs and in burrows and cracks below ground. They return to aquatic sites in late winter.

Home Range: Aquatic individuals return to sites from which they were displaced (Neish 1971). Average adult density was observed to be 300/ha (750/ac) in Marion Lake, British Columbia (Efford and Mathias 1969), and approximately 1800/ha (4500/ac) in Oregon (Isaac and Bond 1963).

Territory: No data.

Reproduction: Breeds from December to July; October to November at higher elevations. Greatest activity March to April in southern part of range. Eggs are laid singly, and hatch in 5-10 weeks (Behler and King 1979). Larvae may transform in late summer or the following June.

Niche: Poisonous skin secretions as adults, but occasionally eaten by fishes (Chandler 1918, Vincent 1947). Predation may be greater on larvae, which are considerably less noxious than adults. Competitive interactions may occur between rough-skinned newts and fish (Evenden 1948) and with the northwestern salamander (Efford and Mathias 1969).

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