

Wildlife of the Month



*The red eft—the juvenile stage of the red-spotted newt.
Photographed off the Orange Trail in the Oswegatchie Hills Nature Preserve*

Red-spotted Newt

(Notophthalmus viridescens)

At-a-Glance

- Adult Length: 4 inches
- Typical Foods: Eats a variety of invertebrates. Adults also eat small fish and tadpoles.
- Distribution in Connecticut: Found throughout the State

Description: The aquatic adults range in color from olive to brownish-green and have red spots on their back. The juvenile terrestrial “red eft” stage, shown above, is bright orange or red.

Habitat: Adults are found in permanent water bodies including ponds, marshes, and shallow lakes. The terrestrial juvenile efts can be found out in the open on moist forest floors after rainfall. They also hide under logs, bark, stones, and leaf litter.

Life History: Up to 400 eggs are attached singly to submerged vegetation in ponds, lakes, or swamps. The eggs hatch into aquatic larvae with well-developed gills.

After a larval state of generally a few months, metamorphosis occurs. The resultant stage is the “eft” stage, shown above. During this stage, which may last a year or more, the animal is often found walking in the open in early morning or after summer rains.

Conservation Threats: Habitat loss, water pollution.