



Western New York Herpetological Society

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Common Name: Rough Skinned Newt
Oregon Newt

Latin name: *Taricha granulose*

Native to: Coastlines of northwest North America from southwest Alaska to the San Francisco Bay area of California

Size: 4.5 – 7 inches in length

General appearance: This newt is a generally plain dark brown dorsally with a bright yellow or orange ventrally and a thin orange crest which runs along the lower tail. The skin is granulated in appearance except for some times during the breeding series when the skin is smooth. This species is also identifiable by its well-developed limbs and flattened head. This species also secretes a toxin as a defense mechanism.

Housing requirements:

Enclosure: A 36-inch terrarium is usually adequate for up to two pairs of newts, though a larger enclosure will be needed for breeding these newts. The enclosure should be two-thirds land and one-third of four to six inches of water. Branches for climbing and hiding places should be provided.

Temperature: Because this species originates from a temperate climate these newts can easily be maintained at temperatures of at least 60° F (typically room temperature is adequate).

Heat/Light: Ultra-violet light is not necessary with this species and typically additional heat sources should not be needed. A 12-hour photoperiod should be provided and can easily be achieved with the use of standard fluorescent lamps and a timer.

Substrate: Aquarium gravel covered with sphagnum moss for the land portion of the enclosure. A synthetic foam can also be used as a substrate since it holds humidity well.

Environment: These newts come from highly humid hilly or mountainous regions. Occasionally they can also be found in grassland areas.

Diet: Several different foods can be fed to these newts. Tubiflex worms, small earthworms, small fish, brine shrimp, beef heart, and crickets can all be offered. Commercially available newt food or sinking fish food pellets can also be fed.

Maintenance: Some sort of filtration should be provided for the water or daily partial water changes should be performed. The land portion should be spot cleaned regularly. Thorough cleanings can be achieved by using a 5% bleach solution. It is very important to wash your hands thoroughly after handling the newt or cleaning the cage and cage accessories because of the toxic secretions of this newt.

Other references or recommended reading:

Staniszewski, Marc, 1995, Amphibians in Captivity, T.F.H. Publishing, Neptune City, NJ

Flank, Lenny, Oregon Newts Available On-Line:

<http://users.rcn.com/spiff.interport//main/caretxt/oregonnewtcare.html>

Indiviglio, Frank, 1997, Newts and Salamanders, Barron's Educational Series, Inc., Hauppauge, NY