

Fire-bellied Newt

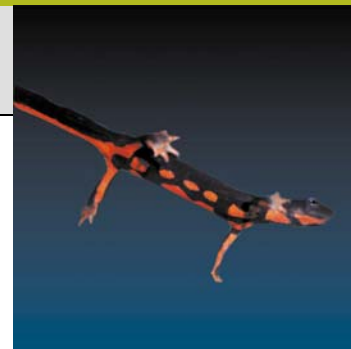
Cynops pyrrhogaster



CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Fire-bellied newts are a popular choice for beginning amphibian keepers. They are dark brown to black, except for the bright reddish orange markings on their bellies. Juvenile newts are terrestrial, but adults are aquatic.



Is a fire-bellied newt the right companion animal for you?

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Check "Yes" or "No" after reading the following statements:

1. I have an appropriate location and space for a newt.
2. I can commit to handling newts as little as possible.
3. I feel comfortable providing live food to a newt.
4. I can commit to providing proper care for this fire-bellied newt.
5. A mature person will provide responsible and primary care for this companion animal.

If you answered "Yes" to these statements, a fire-bellied newt may be the right choice for you! Continue reading about how to care for fire-bellied newts and consult with a PETCO associate to learn more. PETCO is committed to responsible companion animal care.

Average Size 3 to 5 inches long

Life Span 6 to 10 years

Diet If aquatic: brine shrimp, bloodworms, live and frozen chopped night crawlers
 If terrestrial: provide a variety of insects, such as small crickets, mealworms, whiteworms, tubifex worms
 Dust the insects daily with a pure calcium supplement and once or twice weekly with a vitamin/mineral supplement

Feeding Feed at night, every 1 to 3 days; remove uneaten crickets (they may bite the newt)

Housing Size – For terrarium, use a glass, acrylic, or plastic tank; for aqua-terrarium, use a minimum 10-gallon glass tank for 3 or 4 newts; provide a plastic lily pad or an island of smooth wood or rocks (to prevent hurting sensitive newt bellies)

Cover – Tight-fitting screen lid for terrarium; hood for aqua-terrarium; plastic cover with air holes if using plastic box

Habitat – For terrarium, provide a water bowl to submerge in; add fresh, filtered, chlorine-free water to soil on one side only, so one side is moist (not wet) and the other is dry, allowing animal to choose; add pieces of bark for hiding places; for aqua-terrarium, use water filter but ensure areas of still water; fill with lots of non-toxic aquatic plants

Temperature – 55° F. to 78° F., with humidity about 70%

Substrate – Mulch-type commercial material; unbleached paper towels, soil, dampened sphagnum moss, and bark; as land environment, avoid gravel and artificial turf which are too harsh for skin

Do not house different species of reptiles together; do not crowd; be prepared to switch between aqua-terrarium and terrarium, as the newt's needs change

- Recommended Supplies**
- Appropriate size habitat
 - Substrate/commercial mulch
 - Water bowl (terrarium)
 - Bark, plastic lily pad
 - Water filter (aqua-terrarium)
 - Tweezers (terrarium)
 - Appropriate food
 - Worm cup (aqua-terrarium)
 - Humidity gauge
 - Book about amphibians

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Normal Behavior and Interaction

Adults are mostly aquatic, but occasionally climb onto land to rest or bask
Young newts have feathery gills behind their heads and look like tadpoles
They breathe oxygen from the air and hold their breath when they dive

Habitat Maintenance

Use an appropriate sized, small-mesh, soft net to move or block the newt while doing habitat maintenance; avoid handling; if you handle them be sure to wear latex gloves; residue or oil on your skin can harm amphibians
In aqua-terrarium, use filter to help keep water clean; change water weekly
Thoroughly clean the tank at least once a week: set newt aside in a secure habitat; scrub the tank and furnishings with a 3% bleach solution; rinse thoroughly with water, removing all smell of bleach; dry the tank and furnishings; and add clean substrate

Grooming and Hygiene

Inspect skin for abrasions, as well as signs of parasites, infection, or disease
Always wear latex gloves if you must handle your newt and wash your hands after handling the habitat contents to help prevent *Salmonella* and other infectious diseases

Signs of a Healthy Animal

- Eats regularly; digests food properly
- Maintains weight; avoids obesity
- Healthy skin; clear eyes

Common Health Issues

Health Issue (alpha)	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
Gas Bubble Disease	Bloating; bubbles under skin surface; loss of balance.	Ensure water is not too aerated; consult your veterinarian.
Metabolic Bone Disease	Deformities, soft bones, paralysis.	Use vitamin/calcium supplements; consult your veterinarian.
Skin Problems	Abrasions, bacterial and fungal infections.	Consult your veterinarian.
Wounds	Most likely to happen when animal is introduced to new surroundings and panics.	Consult your veterinarian.

Red Flags

- Weight loss
- Skin parasites
- Diarrhea
- Distressed breathing
- Lethargy
- Cloudy or dull eyes
- Skin lesions
- Bloated abdomen
- Poor balance

If you notice any of these signs, please contact your exotic animal veterinarian.

Sources

Keeping Amphibians: A Practical Guide to Caring for Frogs, Toads, Newts, and Salamanders (Unusual Pets Series) by Andrew R. Gray
Salamanders and Newts as a New Pet by John Coborn
The World of Frogs, Toads, Salamanders, and Newts by Robert Hofrichter

Note: The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, please refer to the above sources or contact your veterinarian as appropriate.