

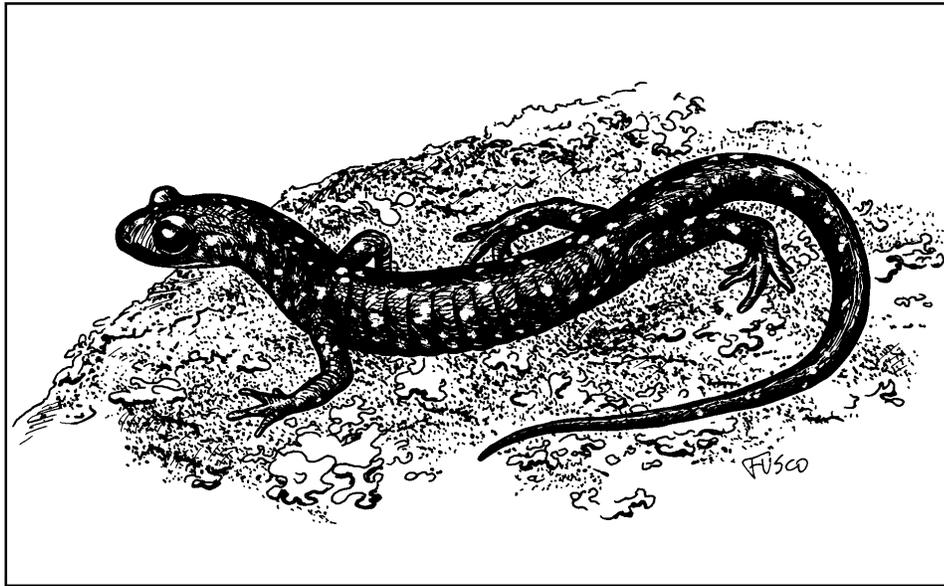
WILDLIFE IN CONNECTICUT

ENDANGERED AND THREATENED SPECIES SERIES

NORTHERN SLIMY SALAMANDER

Plethodon glutinosus

THREATENED



Habitat: Steep, moist, rocky slopes in mature, second growth deciduous or hemlock forests; rotting logs and a thick layer of leaf litter should be present.

Size: Adults, 4.5-6.5 inches.

Life Expectancy: Unknown.

Diet: Ants, beetles, centipedes, earthworms, flies, mites, snails and slugs.

Status: State threatened.

Identification: The slimy salamander is black with a scattering of small white flecks on the back. The amount of flecking can vary among individuals; flecks may be absent on some and plentiful on others. The stomach is uniformly gray-black and the soles of the feet are pale. The tail is round and accounts for half or more of the total body length.

Range: Slimy salamanders range from extreme southwestern Connecticut and southeastern New York to the northern half of Florida. The species also occurs west to southern Illinois, southern Missouri, northern Arkansas and eastern Oklahoma and Louisiana. Disjunct populations have been reported in New Hampshire, northern Illinois, central Louisiana and eastern Texas.

Reproduction: Not much is known about the breeding activities of slimy salamanders. It is suspected that

they are sexually mature at 5 years of age and that the females only breed every other year. Mating probably occurs in both spring and fall. Unlike most other salamanders, open water is not needed for the laying of eggs. Instead, the 13 to 34 eggs (average 16-17) are usually deposited in decaying logs or attached underneath rocks. All development takes place within the eggs, including metamorphosis, so that the emerging juvenile salamanders appear as smaller versions of the adults. The juveniles may also have fewer white flecks on their bodies.

Reason for Decline: The major threat facing the slimy salamander is the loss of undisturbed mature forests to urban and suburban development in southwestern Connecticut.

History in Connecticut: The slimy salamander reaches the northernmost edge of its range in south-

western Connecticut and only occurs in a few locations in Fairfield County.

Interesting Facts: The slimy salamander is aptly named, because when handled roughly or disturbed, it excretes a gluey-white substance from its skin, especially in the tail area. This substance can be very difficult to remove from hands or clothing.

This nocturnal salamander emerges from its burrow at dusk and retreats at dawn. It is occasionally active on rainy days.

During a drought, the slimy salamander can be found deep underground or under rotting logs. The species hibernates underground from November to March.

Protective Legislation: *State* - Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 26-311.

What You Can Do: The protection and proper management of mature, second growth deciduous and hemlock forests in southwestern Connecticut is essential for maintaining populations of slimy salamanders in the state.

CONNECTICUT RANGE

