

**CALIFORNIA TIGER SALAMANDER
(AMBYSTOMA CALIFORNIENSE)**

Federal/California status: Threatened/--



Description

The California tiger salamander ranges in size from about 3 to 6.5 inches (75 to 163 mm). It is a large, stocky salamander with small eyes and a broad, rounded snout. It is black above, with large, pale yellow spots that may be scarce or even absent along the middle of the back.

Habitat

California tiger salamanders breed and lay eggs primarily in vernal pools and other temporary ponds in grassland and open woodland habitats of the Central Valley and at lower elevations of the surrounding foothills. They sometimes use permanent waters if predatory fishes are absent. Streams are rarely used for breeding or egg-

laying. In central California, California tiger salamanders breed mainly from December through February.

Adults spend most of the year in underground shelter, especially ground squirrel burrows. During breeding migrations individuals may be found under objects such as rocks and logs. Before and after breeding, they emerge at night during rains. In late spring or early summer, juveniles disperse from the breeding areas at night. California tiger salamanders eat earthworms, snails, insects, fish, and even small mammals.

Range/distribution

California tiger salamanders occur in Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tulare, and Yolo counties.

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