

Firebelly Newt



What do we look like?

We are a species of amphibians that live most of our lives in freshwater habitats. We can grow up to 6 inches long, including the lengths of our tails. Our colors are usually dark brown or black bodies with bellies that are bright red or orange with black blotches. We get our name from the red and orange colors on our bellies. Like other amphibians and reptiles, we have the bright colors to warn predators that we are poisonous if eaten.





Where we live is...

Our species is native to Asian countries like China and Japan. We enjoy living in cool freshwater lakes, ponds and slow moving streams and rivers with lots of aquatic plants, like Elodea, nearby. Since we are amphibians, we spend parts of our lives living on land or water. Our species, however, leaves the water only once in a while.

What do we eat?

We are carnivores, so we eat other living creatures. Some examples of animals in our diet include: crickets, small earthworms, mealworms, bloodworms, and small feeder fish on occasion. If we live in a confined, overcrowded space, we have been known to cannibalize other newts for food, which means we eat one another. By eating one another, we both feed ourselves, and reduce the competition for food.



Some cool facts about us...

- We can produce a poisonous chemical on our skin when we are very upset, but we give predators warnings first. When surprised, we arch our back and stick our heads and tails into the air. This shows our enemies that the undersides of our bellies have warning colors on them. If all goes well, our predators will catch on that we will poison them if they eat us, and go away.
- It is easy to tell the males and females of our species apart. Just look at our tails. Males' tails have a purple tint to them and are flatter than the females' tails are.
- We can live for very long periods of time if cared for properly. Some of us can even live to the age of 60 years old!

