



## Crested and Marbled Newts (*Triturus* sp.)

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### **Mossy Green Marbles**

Marbled newts can be identified from their vibrant green and black mottled coloration, and reddish-orange dorsal stripe running the length of their bodies. Marbled newts also develop a less pronounced crest than crested newts. Crested newts vary in color from dark brown, greenish, to olive brown with darker spots and mottling along their sides, and a yellowish to orangish dark blotched ventral surface or belly. During breeding, this species also changes its appearance and develops much more prominent dorsal crests, light banding, and skin seems.

### **Taxonomy**

**Life:** All living, physical, and animate entities

**Domain:** Eukaryota

**Kingdom:** Animalia

**Phylum/Sub Phylum:** Chordata/Vertebrata

**Class:** Amphibia

**Order:** Caudata/Urodela

**Suborder:** Salamandroidea

**Family:** Salamandridae

**Genus:** *Triturus*

**Species:** *Triturus* sp.\*

\*Taxonomy subject to change and revision.

### **Lifespan and Longevity**

Captive longevity is uncertain, but potentially up to 5 years or more. They can attain longevity of 10 to 15 years in the wild.

### **Species**

Crested and marbled newts are large, slender to stocky bodied newts consisting of 9 species altogether. Crested newts comprise of seven (7) species including the Anatolian crested newt (*T. anatolicus*), Balkan crested newt (*T. ivanbureschi*), Danube crested newt (*T. dobrogicus*), Italian crested newt (*T. carnifex*), Macedonian crested newt (*T. macedonicus*), Southern crested newt (*T. karelinii*), and Northern crested newt (*T. cristatus*). Marbled newts comprise of the remaining two species, the Marbled newt (*T. marmoratus*) and Southern Marbled newt (*T. pygmaeus*).

### **Distribution and Habitat**

Crested and marbled newts live and reproduce in vegetation rich, fishless ponds, ditches, marshes, channels, or rice paddies, and during their terrestrial phases, surrounding deciduous to

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coniferous woodlands and forests, or other cover rich habitats. The *Triturus* genus of newts is widely distributed over much of Europe or Eurasia depending on the exact species, from western to eastern Europe in Great Britain, France, and Spain and the Iberian Peninsula to west Siberia, with *T. cristatus* being the most widespread species.

### **Conservation Status**

Conservation status is dependent upon the species. Some are IUCN Red List Least Concern (LC). Others are Near Threatened (NT).

### **Experience Level Required**

Intermediate/Moderate.

### **Size**

Depending on the life stage, sex, and species, crested and marbled newts typically range in size from 3 ½ to 6 ½ inches, although up to 8 ½ inches is not unheard of.

### **Housing and Enclosure Plus Temperature, Lighting, and Humidity**

Both crested and marbled newts can be hardy and robust newt species that tolerate a wide variety of environments, and can be housed either in terrestrial or aquatic setups as simple or complex as one prefers. Housing must be sealed and escape proof with a secured top or aquarium hood. A 15 to 20 gallon aquarium, terrarium, or other enclosure is suitable for these newts. They can also be kept communally in proportionally larger housing. The aquatic enclosure should consist of a primarily aquatic setup with a floating platform or other dry area these newts can resort to on a sand, gravel, or bare substrate. An appropriate filter can be used to help maintain water clarity and cleanliness, but conditions should still be kept as still/stagnant as possible as they do not tolerate fast flowing conditions. Also provide ample hiding opportunities in the aquarium using live or artificial planted or floating plants and rocks, or pieces of broken clay pipe. Enclosures should be spot cleaned, sterilized, and water cleaned and changed regularly every 1 to 2 weeks and water temperatures should be kept at around 50 to 75 degrees F in order to maintain these newts in their aquatic stages. These newts can also be found in a wide range of depths, although a minimum water depth of 6 inches or more will suffice.

Alternatively, these newts can be allowed to occupy terrestrial setups in temperatures over 75 degrees F but should not be allowed to become too dry or too wet, and adequate ventilation should be provided. They should be kept in a moist terrestrial setup of similar proportions consisting of a moist, chemical and pesticide free potting soil, peat or sphagnum moss, or damp paper towels that should be misted and cleaned regularly. Additional pieces of cork bark, log hides, or rock hides should also provide additional cover for these terrestrial phases of newts. A large, shallow water dish or pan should also be provided in the terrestrial setups as well to help prevent desiccation or drying out. More specific lighting, heating, and humidity product suggestions and recommendations that can best suit one's needs, as well as those of one's animals can be given as well.

### **Feeding, Diet, and Nutrition**

***Insectivorous to Carnivorous***; Crested and marbled newts are largely carnivorous and opportunistic feeders in the wild, feeding on small fish and fish eggs, a wide variety of insects, arthropods, worms, crustaceans, and other invertebrates. In captivity, these newts are easily fed, and can readily be given chopped nightcrawlers, worms, isopods, feeder crickets, roaches, waxworms, and mealworms at least two to three times weekly, with this being their recommended feeding frequency. Any feeder insects should also be gut loaded and dusted with additional calcium and vitamin D3 supplements as well prior to feeding to ensure optimal

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nutrition and health. More specific dietary and supplementary product suggestions and recommendations that can best suit one's needs, as well as those of one's animals can be given as well.

### **Handling**

As with most amphibians, crested and marbled newts are fragile animals, and handling should be done carefully or avoided and kept to a minimum whenever possible. Terrestrial phases or specimens should also be handled carefully as well, since most terrestrial newt species also have irritating, potentially toxic tetrodotoxins. Ideally, an aquarium net of appropriate size can be used to move aquatic caudates whenever necessary.

**\*\*Also be sure to practice basic cleanliness and hygiene associated with proper husbandry after touching or handling any animals or animal enclosures to prevent the possibility of contracting salmonellosis or any other zoonotic pathogens\*\***

### **Contact**

Authored by Eric Roscoe. For any additional questions, comments, and/or concerns regarding this animal, group of animals, or this care sheet, please email and contact the Madison Area Herpetological Society at [info@madisonherps.org](mailto:info@madisonherps.org)

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