

eastern tiger salamander *Ambystoma tigrinum*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Amphibia

Order: Caudata

Family: Ambystomatidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The eastern tiger salamander averages seven to eight and one-fourth inches in length. Its body is blue-black or brown-black with random, small, yellow blotches. The olive-yellow belly has dark stripes.

BEHAVIORS

The eastern tiger salamander may be found statewide in Illinois. This species lives in woodlands, swamps, prairies, urban areas and farm fields. Active at night, it spends most of its time under ground. Breeding occurs in the spring, although migration to breeding ponds may occur in the fall. Clusters of 25 to 100 eggs are attached to objects on the bottom of a pond. A female may deposit about 1,000 eggs in a breeding season. Incubation depends on the temperature but averages three weeks. Larvae transform to the adult form from July through September. The tiger salamander eats any animal that it can catch, especially worms and insects.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests; marshes; peatlands; swamps; temporary water supplies; wet prairies and fens

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; dolomite prairie; edge; gravel prairie; hill prairie; sand prairie; shrub prairie

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