



## dusky salamander

*Desmognathus fuscus*

Kingdom: Animalia  
Division/Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Amphibia  
Order: Caudata  
Family: Plethodontidae

### FEATURES

The dusky salamander averages two and one-half to five inches in length. The body is tan or brown with six to eight pairs of red or golden spots along the back. These spots may fuse to form a light colored band. A light line is present from the eye to the angle of the jaw. The tail is triangular in cross section.

### BEHAVIORS

The dusky salamander may be found in the southern tip of Illinois. It lives in woodland seeps and cold springs or streams. This salamander is very alert and quick. Breeding occurs in spring and fall. Clusters of 10 to 20 eggs are deposited in nests near the water. The female stays with the eggs and sometimes eats them. Hatching occurs in one to two months depending on the temperature. The larvae reach the water by wriggling. Transformation occurs in less than a year. This salamander eats earthworms, slugs and arthropods (spiders, insects, mites and others).

### HABITATS

- bottomland forests
- coniferous forest
- southern Illinois lowlands
- upland deciduous forest

### ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

### ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: southern tip

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.  
Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume 2: Woodland Habitats CD-ROM.