



longtail salamander

Eurycea longicauda

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

FEATURES

The longtail salamander averages about four to six and one-fourth inches in length. It has a very long tail in relation to its body length. The body is yellow or orange-yellow with brown or black markings along the sides. The belly is yellow with no markings.

BEHAVIORS

The longtail salamander may be found in the southern tip of Illinois, the Mississippi River border counties from about Adams County southward and isolated spots along the Wabash River in east central Illinois. The longtail salamander lives in and along rocky, swift streams in wooded areas, springs and caves. The longtail salamander is nocturnal. It hides under rocks, logs or other objects during the day. It is very quick in its movements. It may wave its tail to distract a predator and even drop the tail if disturbed. Breeding occurs from mid-autumn to early spring. The female deposits up to 100 eggs in water, near water under rocks or in small openings in the ground. Larvae hatch in six to eight weeks and transform to the adult after several months. The longtail salamander eats insects and other small invertebrates.

HABITATS

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

ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: southern tip + Mississippi River border counties south of Adams County and east central
Summer resident:
Migrant:
Winter resident:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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