

SALAMANDERS

Salamanders, amphibians in the order Caudata, are animals which look like a lizard but have smooth or warty skin and have no claws. Lizards have both scales and claws. The former, by necessity, occupy wet habitats or utilize behaviors such as night foraging or foraging within and under logs to retain moisture. On Prince Edward Island, four species of the 380 plus species of salamanders are known to live, namely, Blue-spotted Salamander (*Ambystoma laterale* Hallowell), Spotted Salamander (*A. maculatum* Shaw), Red-spotted Newt (*Notophthalmus viridescens viridescens* Rafinesque), and Redback Salamander (*Plethodon cinereus cinereus* Green). These species can be distinguished using the following key and descriptions. Information on the habitats used by each requires your assistance. Please complete and send in copies of the enclosed reporting form (page 15). If you require more copies, contact me and they will be mailed promptly.

Characteristic	Species
1. Having a bluish-black background	Go to number 2
1. Having a reddish background	Go to number 3
2. Having bluish or blue-white spots and flecks	Blue-spotted Salamander
2. Having yellow to orange spots	Spotted Salamander
3. Having a belly mottled with roughly equal parts of black and white or yellow	Redback Salamander
3. Having red spots in all forms:	Red-spotted Newt
<p>The Red Eft, its land form, is bright orange-red to dull red or orange. Efts, recently transformed from the larval stage may be dull reddish brown to yellowish brown.</p> <p>The adult stage is aquatic and usually it is olive-green with a yellow belly spotted with black. The adult male in breeding condition has a well developed fin on its tail and black horny growths on its back legs and toes.</p>	

BLUE-SPOTTED SALAMANDER

The Blue-spotted Salamander is a member of the mole salamanders which spend most of their lives underground or in leaf litter. This group of species have four toes on the front feet and five on the back. As the name implies, the Blue-spotted Salamander's back and sides have blue or bluish white spots and flecks on a bluish-black background. Its belly is normally black as the Island lies north of the hybridization zone with the Jefferson Salamander (*A. jeffersonianum*)

