

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS ANIMAL?

EUROPEAN ALPINE NEWT *Ichthyosaura alpestris*

The threat: The European alpine newt feeds on frog eggs and larvae and threatens our rare native frogs, including the already endangered Hochstetter's frog. As an introduced, new to New Zealand organism, it could also carry a range of diseases that could affect our native amphibian species.



BACKGROUND

In 2013, a small number of European alpine newts were found in the eastern Waikato region. Following this detection, MPI has been leading an eradication programme, in conjunction with the Department of Conservation and the Waikato Regional Council.

To assist this programme, MPI needs your help to find these newts and asks that you report any suspected sightings to 0800 80 99 66.

In winter the newts tend to hibernate in small burrows, but in spring they can be found in wetlands and ponds where they lay their eggs amongst pond plants. European alpine newts tend to be found close to waterways.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

- » Small amphibians approximately 5–11 cm long.
- » Dark grey or dark brown back – males are grey and females brown.
- » Skin surface on back appears rough textured.
- » Bright orange underside from chin to belly.
- » More mature individuals may have a band of blue or cream with black spots down their sides (between the dark back and orange underside).
- » Mature males have a spotted crest or ridge down their back.

If you believe you have seen these newts, contact MPI immediately on 0800 80 99 66. If possible capture individuals and secure in a sealed container (with air holes). A photograph would be useful, as would detail of the location of the find.