

marbled salamander *Ambystoma opacum*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Amphibia

Order: Caudata

Family: Ambystomatidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The marbled salamander averages about three and one-half to four and one-half inches in length. It has bands or crossbars along the back, a black body and a plain, black belly. The crossbars are gray in females and white or silver in males. Its body is stout.

BEHAVIORS

The marbled salamander lives in woodland areas with dry hillsides or moist sandy spots. It tolerates dry conditions but not low temperatures. It is rarely seen except in the breeding season. Mating takes place on land in the fall. The female deposits about 50 to 200 eggs in a depression on land near woodland ponds or swamps. Hatching depends on the eggs being covered with water. Transformation to a land-based form usually occurs in June or July of the following summer. This salamander eats worms, arthropods (spiders, insects, mites and others) and mollusks (snails, slugs and others).

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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