

# Tremont Salamander Key

1. Gills absent.....adult, **go to 2.**  
Gills present.....larva, **go to 13.**

## ADULTS

- 2(1). Rear legs larger and longer than front legs; light line from eye back to corner of mouth; often dark brownish over all  
.....**Dusky salamanders** (*Desmognathus*), **go to 3.**  
Legs all about same size; line from eye to mouth absent; can be reddish, yellow, golden, gray, black, or variety of colors  
.....**go to 8.**
- 3(2). Undersides blackish; back mottled chestnut and green, not in defined spots; tail keeled; sides sometimes with white spots; head  
big and fat-looking.....**Black-bellied Salamander** (*D. quadramaculatus*)  
Undersides not blackish.....**go to 4.**
- 4(3). Tips of toes have black friction pads, especially when seen from below; tail keeled...black-bellied or seal salamander, **go to 5.**  
Tips of toes same color as rest of toe.....**go to 6.**
- 5(4). Undersides very light, even transparent; mottled back often grading into reddish spots at the tail; often especially bug-eyed and  
long-snouted; tail keeled.....**Seal Salamander** (*D. monticola*)  
Undersides light colored, but otherwise better fitting description for black-bellied salamander in (3)...**Black-bellied Salamander**
- 6(3). Tail keeled, triangular in cross-section.....**go to 7.**  
Tail rounded in cross-section; back usually with reddish and or yellowish stripe, edges either straight or wavy; belly usually  
gray speckled with white; may have orange or yellow cheek patches (make note if you find one with orange cheeks)  
.....**Imitator Salamander** (*D. imitator*)
- 7(6). Back decorated with reddish spots, often ringed with faint white, and sometimes merging together into wavy red stripe on back;  
belly is light colored; tail keeled.....**Spotted Dusky Salamander** (*D. conanti*)  
Back is mottled olive, sometimes with some chestnut; belly is light colored, usually with **YELLOW UNDER THE TAIL**; small  
white spots along sides of body and usually along sides of head.....**Santeetlah-type Salamander** (*D. santeetlah*)
- 8(2). Slender and short-legged; yellow, orange, or golden.....genus *Eurycea*, **go to 9.**  
Not especially slender and/or not yellow, orange or golden..... **go to 10.**

- 9(8). Two dark stripes down the sides of its back; look and often move like tiny yellow snakes  
.....**Blue Ridge Two-lined Salamander** (*E. wilderae*)  
Black spots on back, spots becoming bars on the sides of the tail; usually found away from streams under rocks or logs  
.....**Long-tailed Salamander** (*E. longicauda*)
- 10(8). Stout-bodied; red, orange, or pink with speckles.....**go to 11.**  
Slender-bodied; gray, black, or red only on back.....**go to 12.**
- 11(10). Reddish with black speckles all over body; black chin; eye yellow or golden, NOT brown...**Red Salamander** (*Pseudotriton ruber*)  
Reddish or purple; with black speckles over back; keeled tail; dark lines from eye forward to nose  
.....**Spring Salamander** (*Gyrinophilus porphyriticus*)
- 12(10). Black on top and bottom with white speckles all over, especially on back and sides....**Slimy Salamander** (*Plethodon glutinosus*)  
Salt and pepper belly, back is either with a red stripe or grayish (“leadback”), sometimes with a reddish tip of nose; never has stripe  
on side of head like a dusky (avoid confusing this with Ocoee/Imitator).....**Red-backed Salamander** (*Plethodon serratus*)
- LARVAE**
- 13(1). Gills are white or VERY pale and appearing especially limp; total length usually > 40mm...**Dusky Salamanders, go to 15.**  
Gills various, but not white.....**go to 14.**
- 14(13). Gills like fingers (most obvious part is the central support of the gills), not like plumes, gills usually NOT reddish  
.....**Dusky Salamanders, go to 15.**  
Gills like feathery plumes, often bright red; tail is especially keeled, but often hard to use this to separate species.....**go to 17.**
- 15(14). Black tips to toes, especially if seen from below.....seal or black-bellied salamander, **go to 16.**  
Toe tips are the same color as rest of toe and foot.....**Unidentified Dusky Salamander.**
- 16(15). Head as wide as the thickest part of body.....**Black-bellied Salamander.**  
Head more narrow and streamlined.....**Seal Salamander.**  
Often cannot tell black-bellied salamander from seal salamander
- 17(14). Narrow, without costal grooves (ribbed creases in the sides between legs).....**go to 18.**  
Stout-bodied, elongate, 16-19 costal grooves (“ribbed” creases on side of body).....**go to 19.**
- 18(17). Six to nine pairs of white spots down the back.....**Blue-ridge Two-lined Salamander.**  
No spots on back (yet to be found in Walker Valley streams).....**Long-tailed Salamander.**
- 19(17). Back mottled or streaked with dark; 16-17 costal grooves.....**Red Salamander.**  
Red gills; 17-19 costal grooves; faint oval outline on sides of head.....**Spring Salamander.**