



REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

SHENANDOAH SALAMANDER

ABOUT

The Shenandoah Salamander (*Plethodon Shenandoah*) is long and slender, ranging from 2 to 4 inches long. It usually has a narrow stripe down the middle of the back from neck to tail, ranging from reddish to brown in color. The Shenandoah Salamander resembles a lizard, but its skin is moist and without scales. Because they breathe through their skin, this species typically inhabits cool, damp areas, and is most active when it is dark and humid. It is thought that the eggs, which hatch in late summer/early fall, are deposited in moist, sheltered nests, which are attended by the female. This salamander is often confused with the Red-backed Salamander, with which it competes for food such as spring flies, worms, and other small invertebrates.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Shenandoah Salamander is only found in the higher peak areas of the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia and its populations are encountered on three mountains – Hawksbill, Stony Man, and The Pinnacle. This small terrestrial creature was first recorded in 1967 and placed on the federal endangered species list in 1989. One of the main causes of concern is that they have a very restricted geographical range and potential threats to survival include acid rain deposition, and forest defoliation caused by exotic insects and fire. It is hard to monitor and protect this salamander due to the hostile nature of its habitat and difficult access to its range, but park staff work hard to provide protective measures within or near Shenandoah Salamander habitat.

For more detailed information visit: www.npca.org or www.dgif.state.va.us.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

With which species of salamander is the Shenandoah Salamander often confused?

- a) Brown Striped Salamander
- b) Red-backed Salamander
- c) Hawksbill Salamander
- d) High Peak Salamander

Answer is B.

