

M U D P U P P Y



What is a mudpuppy?

Scientific Name: *Necturus maculosus*

Mudpuppies are aquatic salamanders who belong to the Family Proteidae. They can grow to be about 8-13 in. in length and are easily identified by their size and external gills. They don't bark.

What do mudpuppies eat?

Since mudpuppies are aquatic, their diet typically consists of small fish, crayfish, fish eggs, aquatic insects, insect larvae or nymphs, scuds, annelids, and even other small salamanders or salamander larvae. Also, cannibalism is not uncommon for them.

Where to mudpuppies live?

Habitats include lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, and other bodies of water. They may be active in muddy or weed-choked waters and are essentially nocturnal. Distribution is shown in the map to the left.



What's the mudpuppy's conservation status?

Least Concern

What's so interesting about mudpuppies?

Their external gills! Mudpuppies undergo paedomorphosis - where they become sexually mature and retain larval characteristics. Their gills are a good indicator of their environmental conditions - they are large and bushy if the water is warm or foul (low O₂) and are small and contracted if water is cool & has sufficient oxygen.

What's the mudpuppy's life cycle?

Breeding: in the autumn, underneath rock slabs or logs
Eggs: clutch size ranges from 36-85, incubation takes 38-63 days
Larvae: most remain in the nest 6-8 wks. Average hatchling is 22 mm. Larvae are normally striped with a large middorsal dark stripe flanked by a yellow stripe. Can be uniformly gray.

