

# silvery salamander

Biotype LJJ (formerly *Ambystoma platineum*)

Kingdom: Animalia  
Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Amphibia  
Order: Caudata  
Family: Ambystomatidae

## ILLINOIS STATUS

endangered, native



## FEATURES

The silvery salamander averages four to six inches in length. The body is brown, gray or blue-black. Blue flecks may be present on the lower body.

## BEHAVIORS

The silvery salamander may be found as a native population in Vermilion County (east central Illinois) and an introduced population in Cook County. The native colony in Vermilion County lives in a wooded upland and an adjacent ravine. Breeding occurs in a nearby vernal pool that dries out in mid-to-late summer or earlier. The silvery salamander spends most of the time underground except for a short period when mating occurs. This salamander is an all female, triploid species containing two sets of chromosomes derived from the Jefferson salamander and one from the blue-spotted salamander. To activate egg development, the female mates with a male of a different species (small-mouthed salamander), but the sperm makes no genetic contribution to the offspring. Eggs are deposited in water and attached to vegetation. Young salamanders transform into the adult, land-based form in summer. This animal eats invertebrates.

## ILLINOIS RANGE



egg mass

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### **Aquatic Habitats**

lakes, ponds and reservoirs; temporary water supplies

### **Woodland Habitats**

upland deciduous forests

### **Prairie and Edge Habitats**

none