Smooth Newt
(Lissotriton vulgaris)

Identification:
- Adults up to 10 cm in length.
- Skin is varying shades of grey or brown.
- Males develop a wavy crest along the back during the breeding season.
- Belly yellow or orange, usually with black spots and/or blotches.
- Throat is spotted.

Distribution:
- Native species.
- Common and widespread throughout the UK including Ireland: the UK’s most widespread newt species.
- Found throughout south and central Europe.

Ecology:
- Most active at dusk and dawn.
- Feed on a wide variety of invertebrates.

Lifecycle:
- Emerge from overwintering sites in early spring and head to a pond to breed.
- Males perform a courtship dance to attract females.
- Females deposit eggs between March and June.
- After 2-4 weeks larvae emerge from eggs.
• Efts (terrestrial juveniles) emerge from the water in summer.
• During summer adults spend time in the water hunting frog tadpoles.
• Winter is spent under rocks, in compost heaps or buried in mud at the bottom of ponds.
• Individuals may take advantage of milder weather to forage.

Eggs and larvae:
• Very difficult to distinguish Smooth Newt eggs from Palmate Newt eggs. Greyish-brown or dirty white eggs surrounded by a transparent jelly capsule that is about 3 mm across.
• Eggs deposited individually on leaves of aquatic plants.
• Very difficult to distinguish Smooth Newt larvae from Palmate Newt larvae. Light beige or brown, sometimes with fine black speckling.
• Larvae reach 30 - 40mm before metamorphosis.

Predators and other threats:
• Predators include fish, Grass Snakes, ducks and kingfishers.
• Larvae eaten by water beetles, dragonfly nymphs, fish and adult newts.
• Threatened by loss of habitat and reduced habitat connectivity.