

**CAPTIVE BREEDING OF THE CAUCASIAN SMOOTH NEWT,  
*LISSOTRITON LANTZI* (WOLTERSTORFF, 1914) (SALAMANDRIDAE, AMPHIBIA)**

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Lantz's newt, or the Caucasian smooth newt (*Lissotriton lantzi*), is an endemic species of the Caucasus. The distribution and abundance of this species are decreasing, especially on the periphery of its habitat. The paper presents the results of our study of reproduction, growth and development of Lantz's newt in artificial conditions. Eight couples of animals were caught on the Strizhament Mountain (the Stavropol region, Russian Federation) in 2015 and 2016. The newt couples were constantly kept in water in plastic containers (one couple in each container). The animals were fed with chironomid larvae (bloodworms). Eggs were taken out from the containers every day. Incubation of the eggs was carried out at a water temperature of 17 – 23°C. *Artemia salina* nauplius and (later) bloodworms were the starting feed for the larvae. Breeding dances of males were observed at a water temperature of 9 – 22°C from December 14 till June 9. The first eggs were observed in different females at water temperatures of 8 – 20°C in the period from December 13 till March 21. In general, all eggs were laid in a temperature range from 2 to 22°C. The highest number of eggs from the females was received from February till April, and the highest fertility was shown in March. The total duration of oviposition period (from the first to last egg) ranged from 33 to 140 days. The maximum daily fertility was 20–51 eggs. The last found eggs were observed from March 29 till May 31 at water temperatures from 10 to 22°C. In total, the females posited 212 to 869 eggs for the entire spawning season. The maximum egg length after laying was 2.5 – 3.8 mm. The incubation duration was 10 – 13 days. Prelarvae went out from 75.9% of the eggs, had a total length of 6.2 – 8.6 mm, and began to eat in 1 – 2 days after exiting from eggs at the total body length of 7.7 – 9.6 mm. The total duration of embryogenesis was 12 – 13 days. The larvae survivability from oviposition until the beginning of exogenous feeding was 94.7%. The duration of larval development ranged from 35 to 84 days. The newt development duration from eggs to metamorphosis was 47 – 95 days. The body length of the newts immediately after metamorphosis was 11.1 – 15.8 mm, the tail length was 9.1 – 15.1 mm, and the weight ranged from 0.05 to 0.27 g.

**Key words:** *Lissotriton lantzi*, reproduction, keeping, captive breeding.

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