



# Texas Blind Salamander Species Information

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**Scientific Name:** *Eurycea rathbuni*

**Family:** Plethodontidae

**Description:** Like the San Marcos and Barton Springs salamanders, the Texas blind salamander retains its external gills and lives in water all of its life. As the name suggests, this salamander cannot see, although they do have eyespots when young. They use smell and possibly vibration or pressure to sample their environment for food and mates. This salamander eats blind shrimp and other small crustaceans, snails, and occasionally each other. Females can lay more than 35 eggs at a time and are reproductive year-round in their constant-temperature habitat (about 22°C or 72°F). The eggs take several weeks to hatch.

**Status:** It was listed as endangered in 1967.

**Native Area:** They really don't need functional eyes since they live in the unlit, underground waters of the Edwards Aquifer (only in the San Marcos area).

**Additional Comments:** Texas blind salamanders can grow to more than 13 centimeters (5 inches) long in captivity and can live for more than 5 years.



*Information and photo provided by San Marcos National Fish Hatchery and Technology Center*

[http://fws.gov/southwest/fisheries/san\\_marcos/index.html](http://fws.gov/southwest/fisheries/san_marcos/index.html)