

"Life Tritó Montseny: The conservation toolbox for the endemic Montseny brook newt, *Calotriton arnoldi*"

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The Montseny newt (*Calotriton arnoldi*) is an endemic amphibian of the Montseny Natural Park and Biosphere Reserve (Spain). It was recognized as a new taxon in 2005 and, based on its small range and population size, is listed as "critically endangered" by IUCN. Research has confirmed a strong geographic structure within *C. arnoldi* populations, with the species divided into two distinct populations.

At the end of 2016 the "Life Tritó Montseny" project was launched for the conservation of *Calotriton arnoldi*, focusing on two main objectives: 1) Reduce threats to *C. arnoldi* by improving riparian habitat; 2) Increase the range of *C. arnoldi* and raise the number of newts in the wild by implementing reintroductions.

In 2007 a captive breeding program for *Calotriton arnoldi* was initiated in four breeding centers (Torreferrussa, Pont de Suert and the Barcelona and Chester zoos) to safeguard endangered species and facilitate reintroductions. Three years later, a trial release of the captive-bred newts was carried out. They started with 700 individuals in four different populations. One of the new populations was successful, showing an average annual survival rate of 2.4-8.9%. Currently, out of 20 wild founders they have bred over 2,500 newts at an average rate of 300 newts/year.

A recent habitat suitability study has been completed to identify new release sites for the two populations and improve the success of future conservation translocations. Here we discuss the progress of the captive breeding and reintroduction programme and plans for its future development.