

Ziggy & Dusty



What am I?

Fire Salamanders (Amphibians)

Where do we live in the wild?

In the deciduous forests in central Europe.

How are we looked after as pets?

I need to live in a big tank in a cool place as I don't like to be too warm. I need damp soil to dig and bury in and places to hide.

What do we eat?

I am a carnivore. I eat small bugs, earthworms and slugs. As a pet I eat crickets and wax worms.

What do we look like?

Like a lizard in a wet suit! I have black skin with yellow spots and splodges to warn my predators that I can release toxins from my skin. I have short legs and big eyes so I can see in the dark.

Why do we love them

Ziggy and Dusty are very cute. They do everything slowly including hunting for food.

Our story:

We moved to the Eat Midlands as young salamanders when our previous owner was looking for a good new home for us. We were very tiny then, having recently changed from tadpole like 'water dogs' to adult salamanders. We are growing very slowly.

We like to go out to schools to help children learn more about amphibians. We will sit quite still on your hand but you have to wear gloves to handle us. This is because we can release toxins from our skin if we think a predator is after us! These toxins can make other animals poorly. We can also suck up water (and possibly dirt) through our skin and that can make us poorly.

At home we spend our days buried under our soil sleeping. At night we like to wander slowly around and look for food. We don't always find anything, though. We would love to eat every day but we are told we can't as we would be very fat salamanders if we did! We only really need a few insects a couple of times a week.

