

# Reptiles of Southern Tablelands

- 2 turtles
- 47 lizards
- 14 Snakes



**Long-necked  
Tortoise**  
(*Chelodina  
longicollis*)



## Turtles of Southern Tablelands



**Baby Murray turtle**  
(*Emydura macquarii*)

*Photo by Geoff Robertson*





6 dragons



32 skinks



2 geckos

# Lizards of Southern Tablelands

2 monitors (goannas)

5 legless lizards





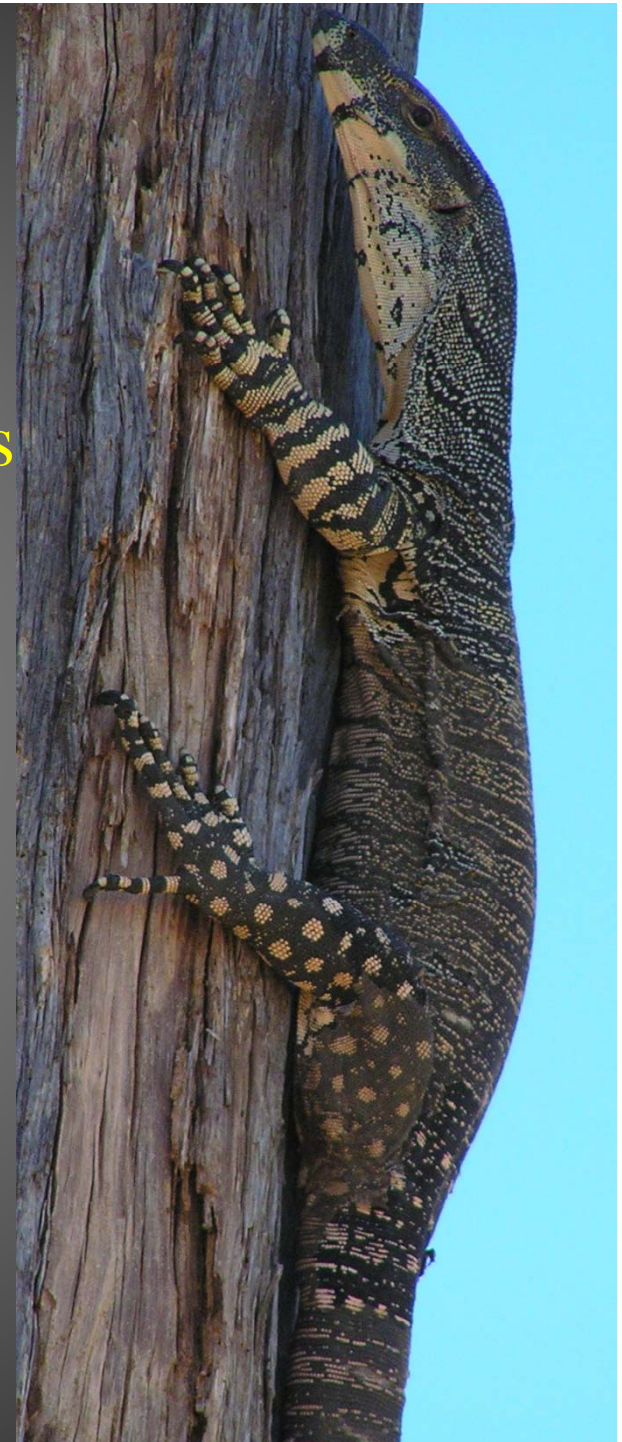


## Monitors of Southern Tablelands

**Rosenberg's monitor** (*Varanus rosenbergi*) *above*, grows to 160cm. It likes open country and lays its eggs in termite mounds.

**Lace monitor** (*Varanus varius*), *right*, grows to 210cm. It is a tree-hugger, which often hides on the other side of trees when danger is perceived.

*Photos by Rosemary von Behrens (above) and Margaret Ning (right)*







Telling them apart – one tree dweller and one ground dweller. Also check out the tails.

*Photos by Jim Williamson (left) and Rosemary von Behrens (right)*





**Left: Marbled Gecko**  
(*Christinus marmoratus*) 14.5cm

**Below: Eastern Stone Gecko** (*Diplodactylus vittatus*) 12.5cm

*Photos by Margaret Ning (left) and John Wombey (below).*

## Creatures of the night: Geckos







Water dragon



Bearded dragon



Grassland earless dragon

# Dragons of the Southern Tablelands

Jacky lizard



Nobbi



Mountain dragon







## Eastern water dragon

(*Physignathus lesueurii*) grows to 95cm.

A water specialist.

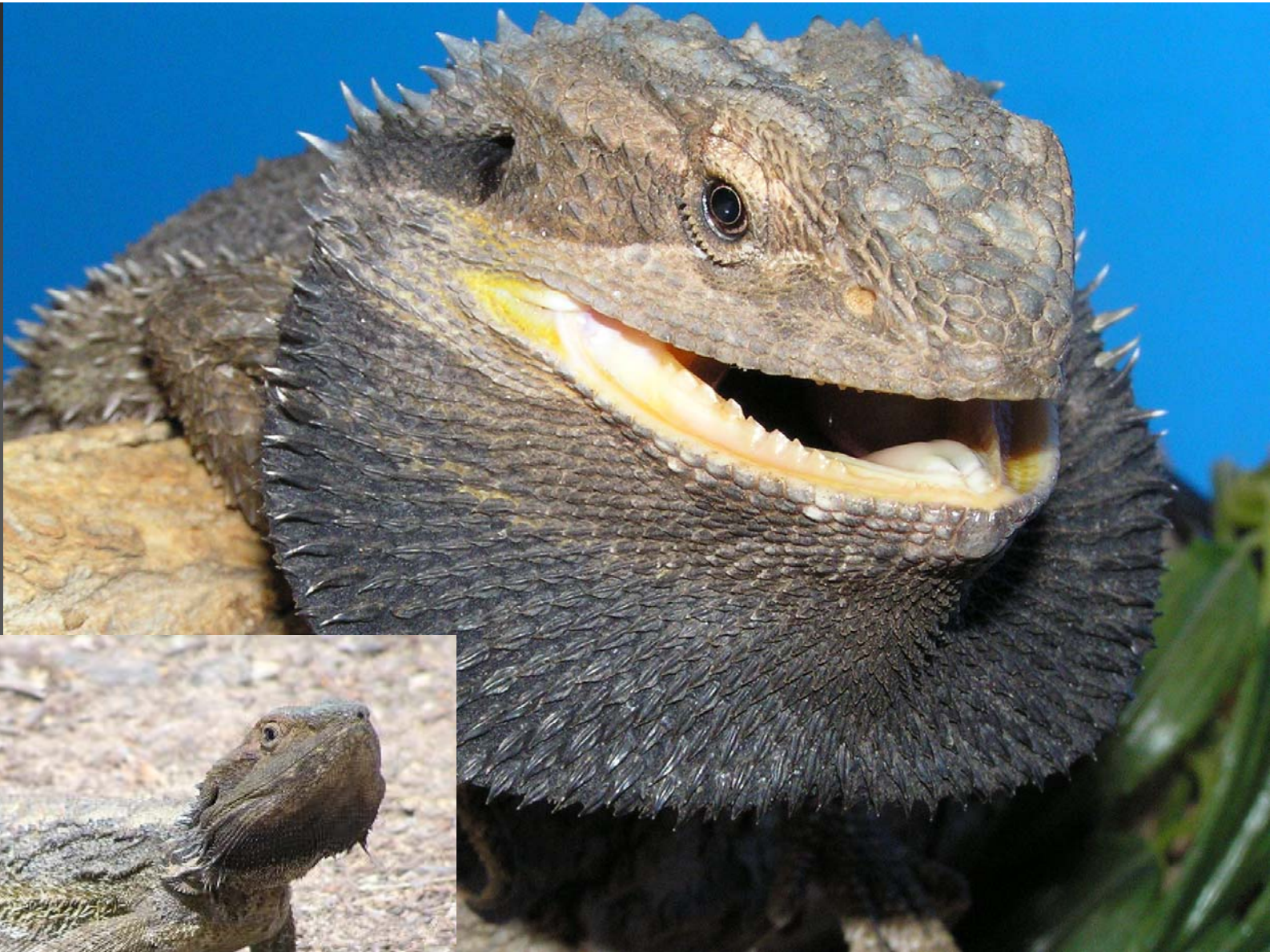
*Photos Geoff Robertson*





# Eastern bearded dragon

(*Pogona  
barbata*)  
grows to 55cm.



*Photos Geoff Robertson*





**Jacky, nobbi and mountain dragons** look similar.

**Jacky Lizard** (*Amphibolurus muricatus*) Top left. Grows to 37cm. *Photo by Margaret Ning.*



**Nobbi** (*Amphibolurus nobbi*) 31cm.



**Mountain Dragon** (*Rankinia diemensis*) Photos (middle and bottom) show nest building. Has spines on its tail. Grows to 15cm. *Photos by Roger Farrow.*



**Jacky lizard** (right) has a bright orange mouth and **nobbi** (below) a pink mouth. Mountain dragon mouth lining is blue and tongue is yellow.



*Photos by John Wombey.*





**Grassland earless dragon**  
(*Tympanocryptis pinguicolla*)

Grows to 16cm.



Photos by  
Geoff Robertson (above)  
and Margaret Ning (left).



# Skinks of Southern Tablelands

16 genera and 32 species

- Blue tongues & relatives (5)
- Rock skinks (5)
- Water skinks (5)
- Striped skinks (3)
- Other skinks with
  - 4 fingers & 5 toes (2)
  - Reduced limbs (2)
  - 5 fingers and 5 toes (10)





# Blue tongues & relatives



## Blue-tongues

**Eastern** (top) grows to 56cm.

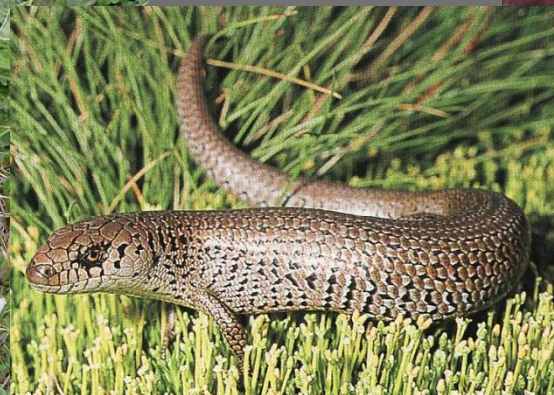
**Blotched blue-tongue** (bottom) 48cm.



**Shingleback**  
right, 39cm.

**Northern she-oak**  
bottom right,  
34cm.

**Alpine she-oak**  
below, 22cm.







**Eastern blue-tongue lizard** (*Tiliqua scincoides*)

*Photo by Margaret Ning.*



## **A true story**

Houdini an eastern blue-tongue escaped from its loving owners by squeezing through a 6mm drainage grill.

He then climbed up the inside of a three meter drain pipe.





Squeezing under the roof tile was no problem.

Houdini lived in ceiling and sunned himself in the gutter for two months.

He was finally caught and returned home.

*Photo by Margaret Ning.*







**Blotched  
blue-  
tongue**  
(*Tiliqua  
nigrolutea*)

*Photos by Geoff  
Robertson*





Shingleback (*Trachydosaurus rugosus*).

Local populations are black (left photo).

*Photos by Margaret Ning (above) and Geoff Robertson (left).*

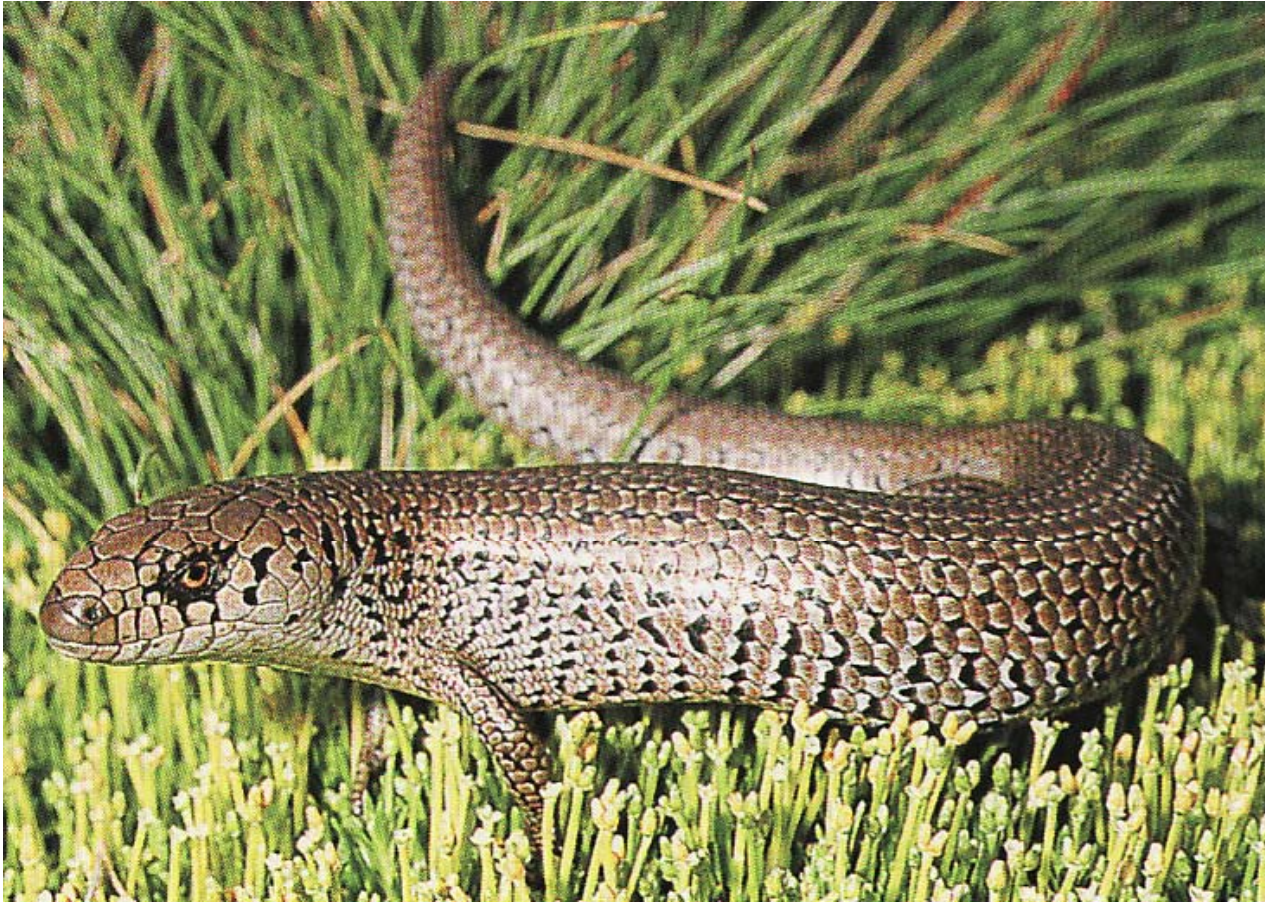




Northern she-oak skink (*Cyclodomorphus michaeli*) restricted to escarpment.

*Photo by John Wombey.*





The alpine she-oak  
(*Cyclodomorphus  
praealtus*) is restricted to  
NSW Alps.

Photo: *A Field Guide to Reptiles of New South Wales*, Swan, Shea and Sadlier



# Rock skinks (*Egernia*)

- Cunningham's skink grows to 39cm.
- Black rock-skink 28 cm.
- White's skink 32 cm.
- Snowy Mountains rock-skink 32 cm.
- Tan-back rock-skink 28cm.







Cunningham's skink (*E. cunninghami*) grows to 39cm. Photo by Geoff Robertson





Black rock-  
skink  
(*Egernia  
saxatilis*)

grows to 28cm

Photos by Margaret Ning and  
Geoff Robertson





White's skink (*Egernia whitii*) grows to 32cm

*Photos by Margaret Ning and Geoff Robertson.*





Tan-back rock-skink (*E. montana*) grows to 28cm.

*Photo by Pierre Cochard*





Snowy Mountains rock-skink (*Egernia guthega*) grows to 32 cm.

*Photo: A Field Guide to Reptiles of New South Wales, Swan, Shea and Sadlier*



# Water skinks (*Eulamprus*)

Highly patterned largish skinks with obvious black flecks on backs. Found along streams and watercourses, often on rocky ledges.

- **Southern water-skink** Grows to 21cm.
- **Yellow-bellied water skink** 21cm.
- **Eastern water-skink** 28cm.
- **Alpine water-skink** 19cm.







Southern water-skink (*Eulamprus tympanum*). Grows to 21cm. White mark behind the ear.

*Photo by Geoff Robertson*





**Yellow-bellied water skink** (*Eulamprus heatwolei*) Grows to 21cm. No white ear mark.

*Photo: A Field Guide to Reptiles of New South Wales, Swan, Shea and Sadlier*





Eastern water-skink (*Eulamprus quoyii*). Grows to 28cm. Back is metallic greenish to greyish-brown with a more obvious white-yellow dorsolateral stripe.

*Photo by John Wombey.*





Alpine water-skink (*Eulamprus kosciuskoi*) in spagnum.

Grows to 19cm. Black flecks form stripes. Restricted to Alpine areas.

*Photo by John Wombey.*



# Striped skinks (*Ctenotus*)

Complex pattern of stripes and dots. Found in drier areas.

- Robust ctenotus Grows to 37cm
- Spotted ctenotus Grows to 22 cm.
- Copper-tailed ctenotus.  
Grows to 19cm.

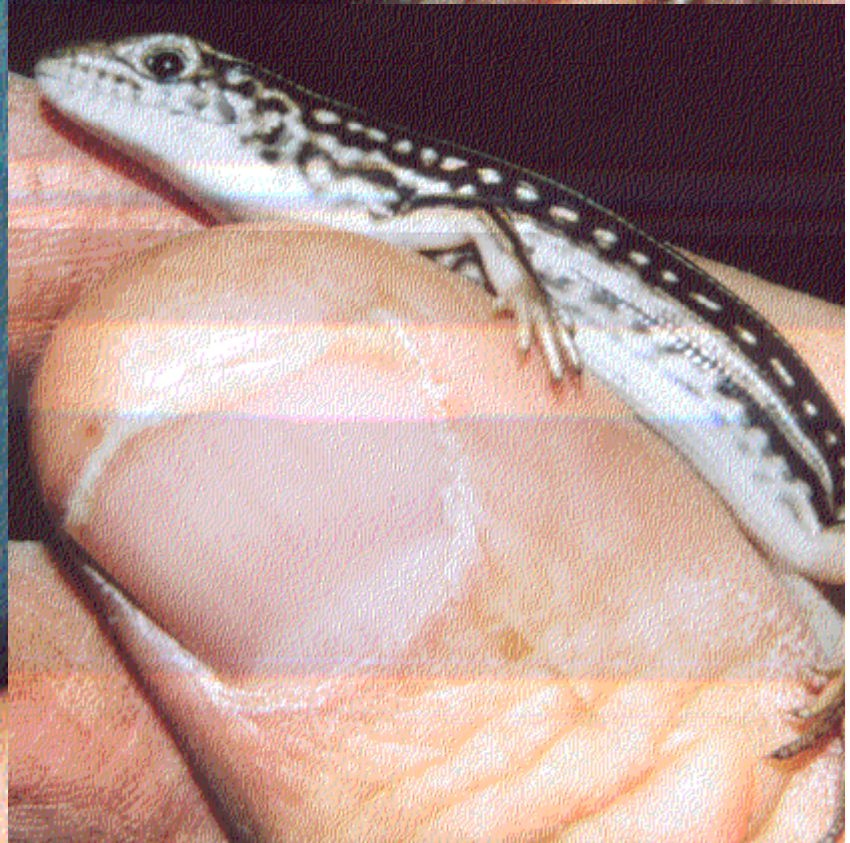






Baby robust  
ctenotus (*Ctenotus  
robustus*) grow to 37cm.

Robust ctenotus has no dots  
on back, unlike spotted  
ctenotus (next slide).



*Photos by Margaret Ning.*





Spotted ctenotus (*Ctenotus orientalis* or *C. uber*)

Grow to 22 cm. Has spots on back.

*Photo by John Wombey.*





Copper-tailed ctenotus (*Ctenotus taeniolatus*)

Grows to 19cm.

Photo by John Wombey.



# Four-fingered and five-toed.

- Southern rainbow skink  
Grows to 16cm.
- Common dwarf skink  
10.5cm.







Southern rainbow skink (*Carlia tetradactyla*)

Grows to 16cm. Note orange and red lateral stripes.

*Photo by John Wombey.*





Common Dwarf Skink (*Menetia greyii*)

Grows to 10.5cm.

*Photo by John Wombey.*



# Skinks with reduced-limbs

- **Three-toed skink** Grows to 11cm.
- **MacCoy's skink** 11cm.







Three-toed skink (*Hemiergis decresiensis*). Grows to 11cm. Belly is yellow.

*Photos by Geoff Robertson*





MacCoy's skink (*Nannoscincus maccoyi*).

Grows to 11cm.

*Photo by John Wombey.*



# Other smaller skinks

with five fingers & toes

- **Sun-skinks** two *Lampropholis* species. Grow 9-11cms.
- **Tussock and related skink** four *Pseudemoia* species. 16-18cm.
- **Red-throated and bold-striped skink** two *Acritoscincus* species. 20-22cm.
- **Weasel skink** 16cm.
- **Southern forest skink** 14cm.
- **South-eastern morethia skink** 12cm.



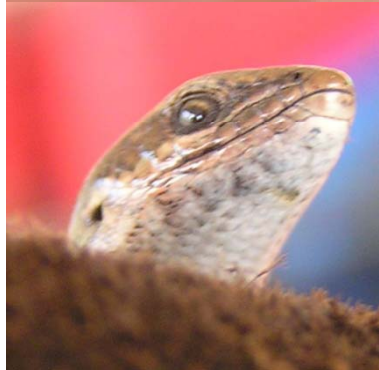




Grass sunskink (*Lampropholis guichenoti*) grows to 9cm.

*Photos by Margaret Ning and Geoff Robertson.*





Garden sunskink  
(*Lampropholis  
delicata*), grows to  
11cm.

*Photos by Geoff Robertson*



## Tussock and related skinks

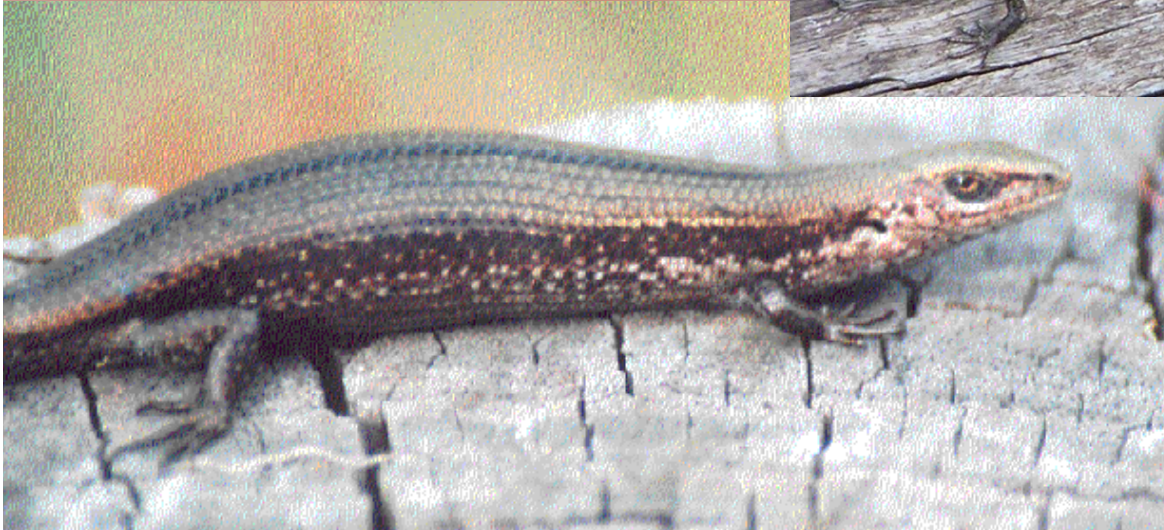
(*Pseudemoia*)

Grow 16 to 18 cm.

- Woodland tussock skink
- Grassland tussock skink
- Glossy grass skink
- Spencer's skink







Woodland tussock  
skink (*Pseudemoia  
entrecasteauxii*). Grows to  
17cm. Often seen with patches of  
light red around head. Gravid  
(pregnant) left.

*Photos by Margaret Ning and Geoff Robertson.*





Grassland tussock skink (*P. pagenstecheri*) has distinctive red lateral stripe. Grows to 17cm.

*Photos by Geoff Robertson*





**Glossy grass skink** (*P. rawlinsoni*) Grows to 18cm.

*Photo: A Field Guide to Reptiles of New South Wales, Swan, Shea and Sadlier*





## Spencer's skink (*Pseudemoia spenceri*)

Grows to 16cm. Has very distinctive stripe and dot pattern.

*Photos by Margaret Ning and Geoff Robertson*





Red-throated skink (*Acritoscincus platynotum*)  
Grows to 22cm. Can have a bright red-throat and its back is iridescent.

*Photo by John Wombey*

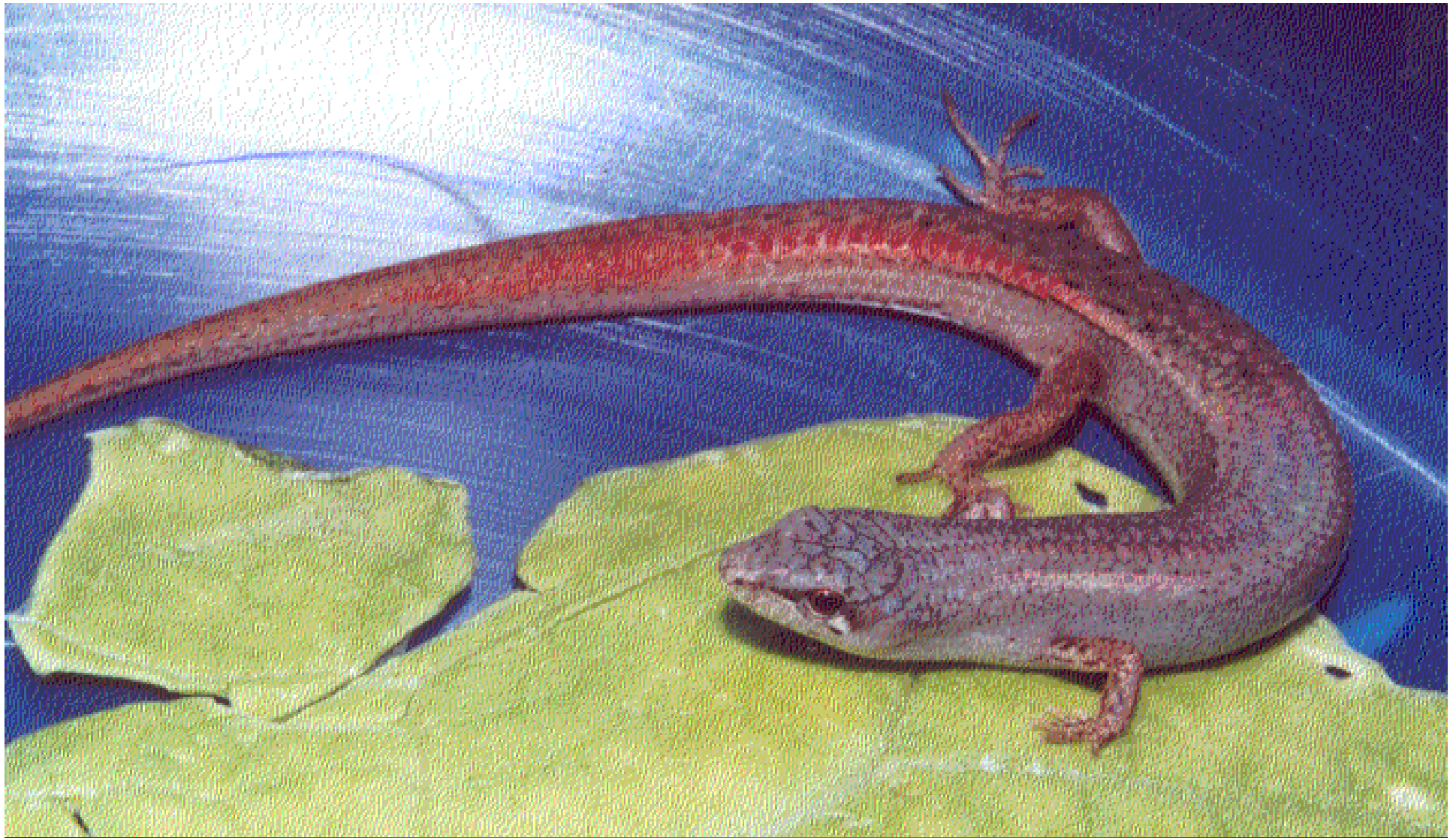




Bold-striped skink (*Acritoscincus duperreyi*) Grows to 20cm.

*Photo by Geoff Robertson*





Weasel skink (*Saproscincus mustelinus*)

Grows to 16cm.

*Photo by Margaret Ning.*





Southern forest skink (*Niveoscincus coventryi*)

Grows to 14cm.

*Photo by John Wombey*





Boulenger's morethia skink (*Morethia boulengeri*)

Grows to 12cm.

*Photo by John Wombey.*



# Snakes of the Southern Tablelands

- One python
- One blind snake
- Twelve front-fanged snakes (*elapids*)







**Carpet or diamond python** (*Morelia spilota*)

Found north west of Canberra and coast. Grows to 4m.

*Photo taken near Gundagai by John Wombey.*





**Blackish blind snake** (*Ramphotyphlops nigrescens*)

Lives underground. Grows to 75cm.

Photo taken at Coppin's Crossing by John Wombey.



# Front-fanged –(*Elapids*)

- Are the most common
- All are venomous
- Six grow a meter or more:
  - Eastern brown (Grows to 230cm)
  - Red-bellied black (170cm)
  - Tiger (140cm)
  - Highlands copperhead (110cm)
  - Common death adder (100cm)
  - Yellow-faced whipsnake (100cm)







## **Eastern brown snakes (*Pseudonaja textilis*)**

can vary greatly in colour and may even have bands.

*Photo taken at Fyshwick by John Wombey*





## **Red-bellied black snake** (*Pseudechis porphyriacus*)

Maximum size 1.7m. Average adult size 1.2m.

*Photo provided by Tara Goodsell.*





**Tiger snake** (*Notechis scutatus*) Maximum size 2.3m, average adult size 1.3m. In this region colour can vary but bright yellow belly is usual.

*Main photo taken at Rowes Lagoon by John Wombey. Other photo by Margaret Ning.*





**Highland copperhead** (*Austrelaps ramsayi*). Two common forms: Back almost black or back a golden brown with a darker head. Underside can be white, cream or light yellow. Maximum size 110cm, average adult size 80cm.

*Photos by Geoff Robertson and John Wombey*





**Common death adder**  
(*Acanthophis antarcticus*).

Maximum size 100cm, average adult size 50cm.  
Common death adder like other snakes species,  
can vary in colour.

*Top photo: Ric Longmore's death adder taken by Geoff  
Robertson. Bottom photo by John Wombey.*







Yellow-faced whipsnake (*Demansia psammophis*) Grows to 100cm.

*Photo: A Field Guide to Reptiles of New South Wales, Swan, Shea and Sadlier*



# The smaller elapids

- While still venomous are less dangerous as they have smaller teeth.
- They include:
  - Bandy bandy (grow to 85cm)
  - Small-eyed snake (80cm)
  - Dwyer's black-headed snake & little whip-snake (50 and 40cm)
  - White-lipped & mustard-bellied snakes (45 and 40cm)







**Bandy-bandy** (*Vermicella annulata*).

Maximum size 85cm, average adult size 55cm.

*Photo by John Wombey*





**Small-eyed snake** (*Rhinoplocephalus nigrescens*)  
Maximum size 80cm, average adult size 45cm. Eyes are noticeably small.

*Photo provided by Tara Goodsell*





**White-lipped snake** (*Drysdalia coronoides*).

Maximum size 45cm, average adult size 35cm.

*Photo taken at Timbillica State Forest by John Wombey*





**Mustard-bellied snake** (*Drysdalia rhodogaster*).

Maximum size 40cm, average adult size 35cm.

*Photo taken at Bermagui Nature Reserve by John Wombey*





## **Little whip snake** (*Suta flagellum*)

Maximum size 40cm, average adult size 30cm. Largely confined to Southern Tablelands.

*Photo provided by Tara Goodsell*





## Dwyer's black-headed snake

(*Suta spectabilis*)

Maximum size 40cm, average adult size 30cm.

More wide spread than little whip snake.

Photo: Coppin's Crossing by Ric Longmore





# Legless Lizards of the Southern Tablelands

*Photo of striped legless lizard by Geoff Robertson*



# Legless lizards

## Five species

- **Pink-tailed worm lizard** Grows to 23cm
- **Striped legless lizard** 28cm
- **Plain legless lizard** 47cm
- **Burton's legless lizard** 62cm
- **Southern scaly-foot** 86cm







**Pink-tailed worm lizard** (*Aprasia parapulchella*) Grows to 23cm

*Photo by Ross Bennett*





**Striped legless lizard** (*Delma impar*) grows to 28cm. Two colour forms.

*Photos by Ross Bennett and John Wombey*





**Plain legless lizard** (*Delma inornata*) grows to 47cm.

*Photo by John Wombey*





**Burton's legless lizard** (*Lialis burtonis*) grows to 62cm.

*Photo by John Wombey*



**Southern scaly-foot** (*Pygopus lepidopodus*) - grows to 86cm.

The legless lizard's closest relative is the gecko.



*Photo provided by Tara Goodsell*



## How do legless lizards (above) differ from snakes (below)?

- 50-80% is tail. Snakes have very short tails.
- No forked tongues. Snakes and monitors have fork tongues.
- Often have vestiges of back legs. This is unusual in snakes.
- Teeth are very different in snakes.
- Have ears – snakes don't.
- Cannot curl up like snakes.





Prepared by  
**Geoff Robertson**  
with assistance of John Wombey

for STEP and ACTHA

Photos provided by:

- Ross Bennett
- Pierre Cochard
- Roger Farrow
- Tara Goodsell
- Richard Longmore
- Margaret Ning
- Geoff Robertson
- Warren Saunders
- Rosemary von Behrens
- Jim Williamson
- John Wombey

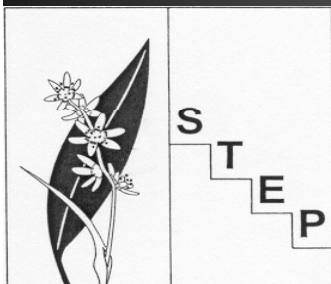


Photo by  
Warren  
Saunders

