



- New Zealand has over 125 different species of native lizard.
- At least 11 of these species (5 gecko and 6 skink) live in Taranaki
- All native NZ lizards (except for one skink species) give birth to live young and are slow to reproduce
- They have a long life – native geckos have been found in the wild over 50 years old
- Having evolved without mammalian predators they are easy prey for cats, rats and mice
- NZ lizards eat insects, fruit and nectar
- Lizards are important for our native ecosystems as:
  - tiny predators (eating insects and bugs)
  - prey (food for native birds)
  - pollinators and seed dispersers of many native plants

## Native and Special

## Skinks and Geckos – what's the difference?

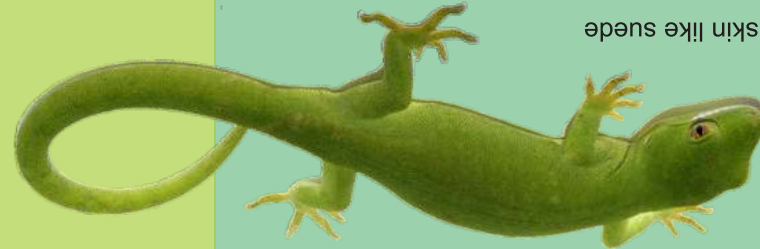
### Things to look out for:

- Slender and shiny like a snake with legs
- No obvious neck
- Eyes that blink
- Narrow toes

### Skinks

- Loose baggy skin like suede
- Have a 'neck'
- Large round eyes that don't blink
- they lick their eyes to clean them
- Often have wide toe pads

### Geckos



### Skinks



**AT RISK**

Over 90% of New Zealand's native lizards are Threatened or At Risk.

Many are now restricted to offshore islands or areas with intensive predator control.

### Lizards are at risk from:

- **Predators**  
Cats, rats, mice, hedgehogs and mustelids (stoats, ferrets, weasels)

- **Habitat destruction**  
Subdivision, construction, landscaping, vegetation clearance

- **Illegal collection and smuggling**

- **Competition and displacement**  
from introduced lizards (plague skink)

All Native lizards are protected under the WILDLIFE ACT 1953. This means they cannot be collected or kept without a permit. It is also an offence to kill them or destroy their habitat. Please consider our native lizards when removing vegetation or doing earthworks.



badcatchins.com

## Plague Skink (Australian Invader)

Plague skinks or rainbow skinks came from Australia and are spreading through NZ. They have only recently been confirmed in Taranaki.

- Plague skinks are agile and fast.
- They lay eggs and are able to reproduce quicker than our native species.
- They can build up large numbers quickly and take up all the best basking and feeding sites displacing our native species.
- Plague skinks are curious and inquisitive and often hitch rides by climbing into luggage, cars, plants etc.
- Their eggs are easily transported in potting mix and garden materials.

Further information: <https://tinyurl.com/plague-skink>



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## International REPTILE AWARENESS DAY 21 October



**Taranaki Lizard Group**  
e: [aranakilizards@gmail.com](mailto:aranakilizards@gmail.com)



**NZ Herpetological Society**  
e: [nzhs@reptiles.org.nz](mailto:nzhs@reptiles.org.nz)  
[www.reptiles.org.nz](http://www.reptiles.org.nz)



**Wild For Taranaki**  
e: [contact@wildfortaranaki.nz](mailto:contact@wildfortaranaki.nz)  
fb: [facebook.com/wildfortaranaki/](https://facebook.com/wildfortaranaki/)  
[www.wildfortaranaki.nz](http://www.wildfortaranaki.nz)



**Department of Conservation**  
[www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)



## Lizard Habitats



COASTAL



WETLAND  
SHRUBLAND



FOREST



GRASSLAND



URBAN

Native lizards live in a variety of habitats from down near the coast, in urban areas and up on the mountain.

Lizards need to be safe from predators in undisturbed places like:

- Grassy weedy areas
- Shady moist areas – leaf litter
- Rotting logs or old piles of timber or stones
- Stacks of bricks, pavers or rock piles
- Crevices in walls and sheds
- Trees
- Clay banks
- Established foliage bushes

## What You Can Do



### Make your garden lizard friendly. Plant:

- Low growing and clump forming plants like toe toe, *Astelia* and flax
- Dense climbers (but not weeds)
- Divaricating (many branched) native plants
- Nectar producing plants like manuka, flax, lacebark, rata, *Pittosporums*



### Create spaces for lizards to live:

- Rock piles
- Logs and debris in garden
- Leave areas of deep leaf litter and mulch



### Reduce use of chemicals and sprays

Lizards eat insects and drink nectar!



### Control predators

Especially rats, mice and stoats



### Be responsible pet owners

Cats are very good lizard predators and can easily wipe out local lizard populations.



### Report all lizard sightings to DOC

<https://tinyurl.com/report-a-sighting>

# Look out FOR Lizards in Taranaki

© Dr Paddy Ryan





# Taranaki's Local Lizards

Content & layout: © Halema Jamieson 2017 | Design: © Brenda Waterman 2017 | Photos: © Trent Bell  
[IMAGES NOT TO SCALE]



**Barking gecko**

*Naultinus punctatus*

**AT RISK**



**Brown skink**

*Oligosoma zelandicum*

**AT RISK**



**Northern grass skink**

*Oligosoma polychroma*



**Goldstripe gecko**

*Woodworthia chrysosiretica*  
(Moko mangaeka)



**AT RISK**



**Forest gecko**

*Mokopirirakau granulatus*

**AT RISK**



**Kupe skink**

*Oligosoma aff. infrapunctatum*

**THREATENED**



**Ornate skink**

*Oligosoma ornatum*

**AT RISK**



**Pacific gecko**

*Dactylocnemis pacificus*



**AT RISK**



**Elegant gecko**

*Naultinus elegans*

**AT RISK**



**Striped skink**

*Oligosoma striatum*

**AT RISK**



**Copper skink**

*Oligosoma aeneum*

**AT RISK**

## Lizard Habitats

Native lizards live in a variety of habitats from down near the beach to up on the mountain.

