

Reptile fauna of Christmas Island

Many of Christmas Islands' terrestrial reptiles have undergone significant decline in the last few years. To gain a better understanding of how to manage our reptiles Christmas Island National Park is now developing a range of programs including a captive breeding program. We are also examining the possibility that the declines are related to an introduced disease, and developing a program to better understand the impacts of habitat alteration and the introduction of various feral animals.

An important step to better understand the declines is to know where the reptiles occur across the island. This is an enormous job as:

- the island has many areas that are difficult to get to
- some of the reptile species are very hard to locate
- there are times of the year when reptiles are less active and
- many of the native species are in very low numbers



Lister's gecko *Lepidodactylus listeri*

As a result the park would love the Christmas Island community to help. We would like to develop a 'Reptile Watch' program.

We will train all interested people in reptile identification. You will not only help to collect valuable survey and monitoring data, but also be able to follow up on leads from potential sightings by other community members. We will collate all of this information use it to try to secure the island's terrestrial reptiles.



Blue-tailed skink | photo: Dion Maple

If you would like to be involved or have any questions please contact:

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Christmas Island's reptiles

Christmas Island has six native terrestrial reptiles and five introduced reptile species.

Native

- Blue-tailed skink *Cryptoblepharus egeriae*
- Forest skink *Emoia nativitatis*
- Coastal skink *Emoia atrcostata**
- CI blind snake *Typhlops exocoeti*
- Lister's gecko *Lepidodactylus listeri* *
- CI giant gecko *Cyrtodactylus sadleiri*

Introduced

- Asian house gecko *Gehyra mutilate*
- Barking gecko *Hemidactylus frenatus*
- Grass skink *Lygosoma bowringii*
- Flowerpot blind snake *Ramphotyphlops braminus*
- Asian wolf snake *Lycodon capucinus*

* denotes presumed extinct