

Key to the Skinks of South Australia



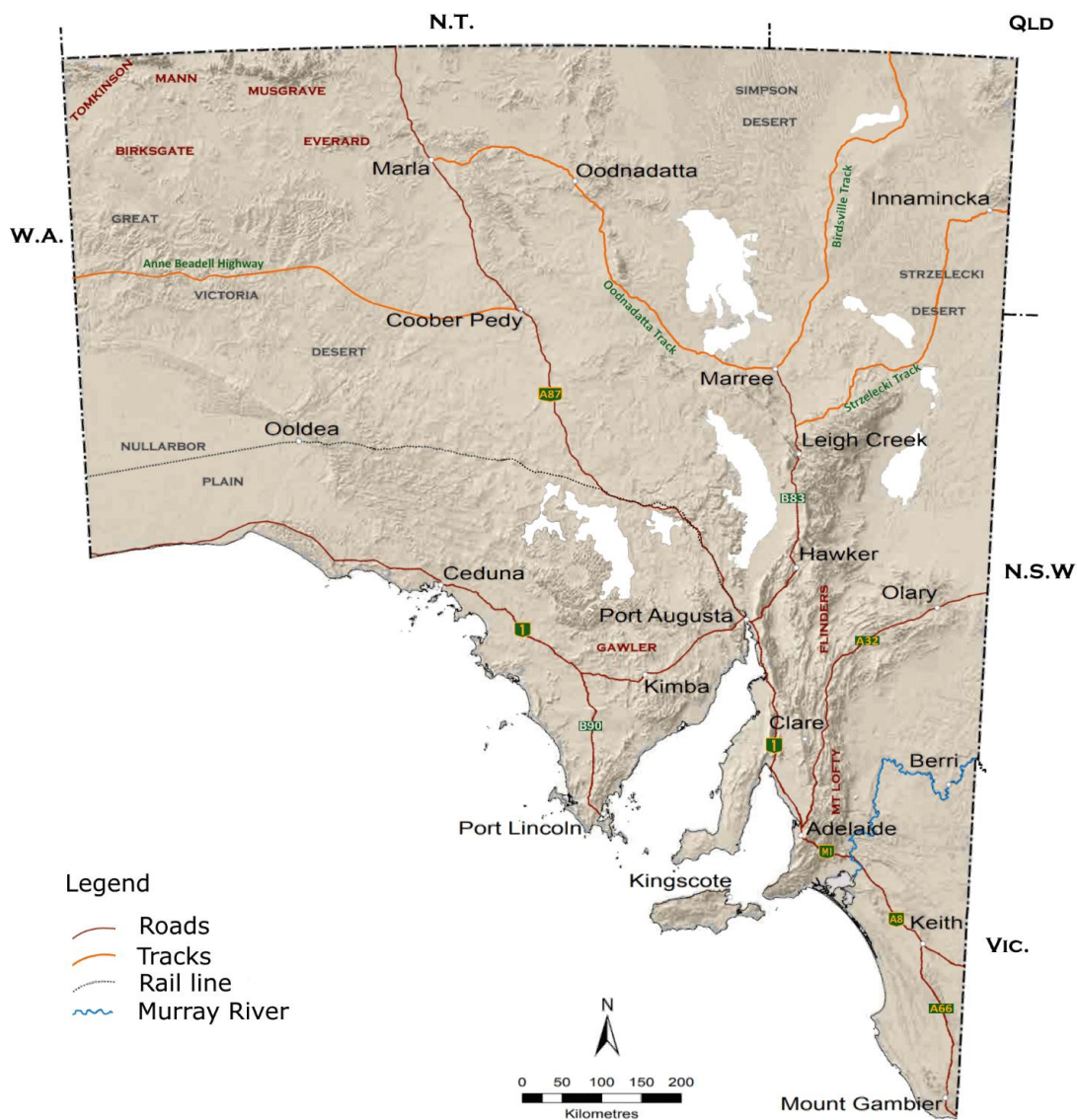
Eastern Desert Ctenotus, *Ctenotus regius*

Mark Hutchinson & Ian Williams

Version: May 2026
mark.hutchos@gmail.com

The Skinks of South Australia

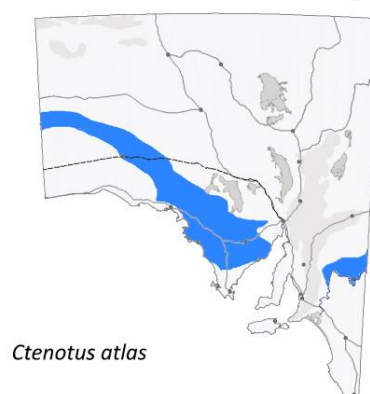
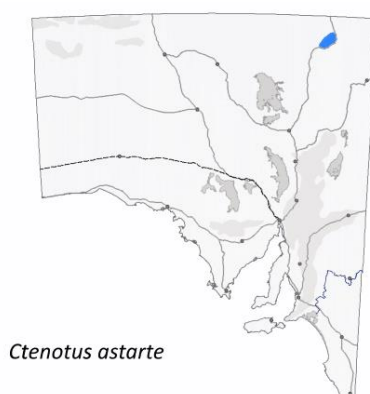
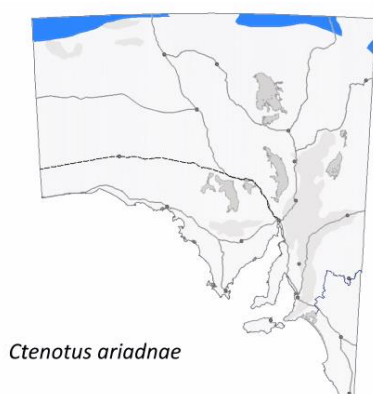
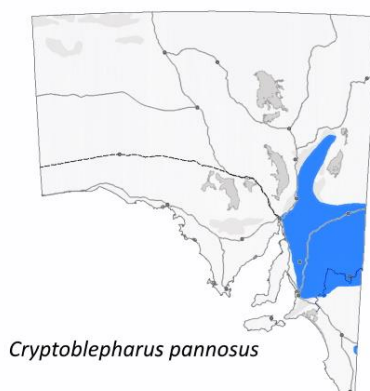
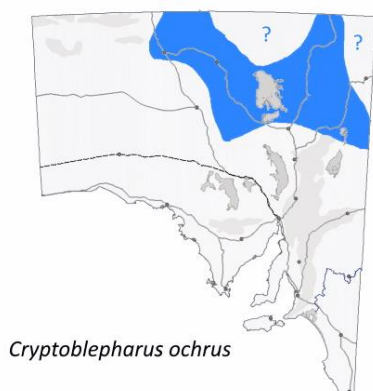
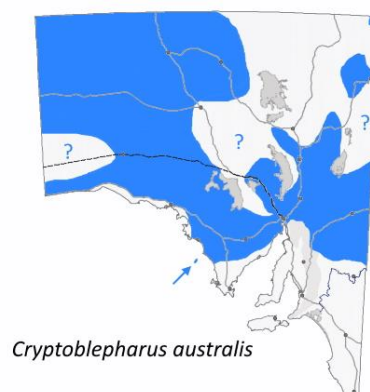
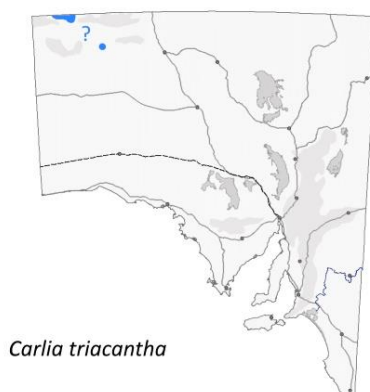
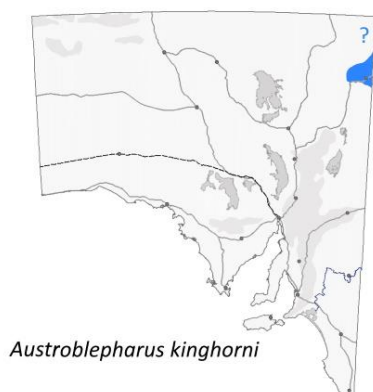
Geographic Distribution

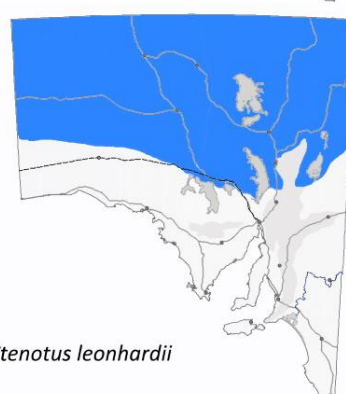
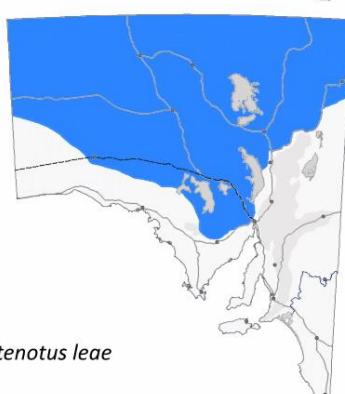
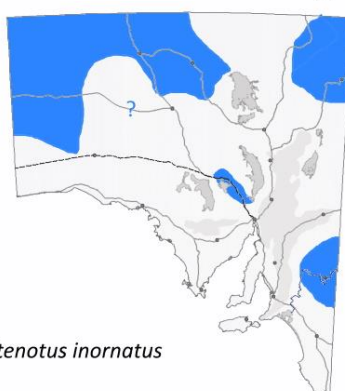
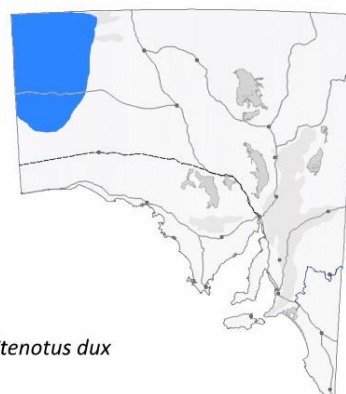
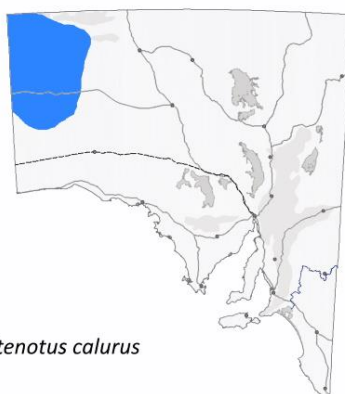


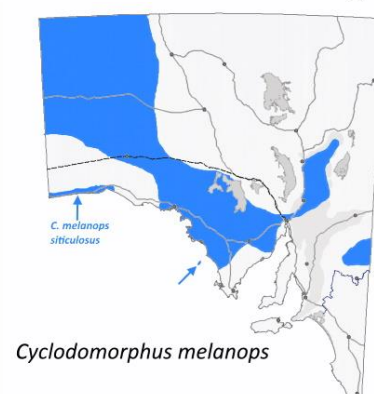
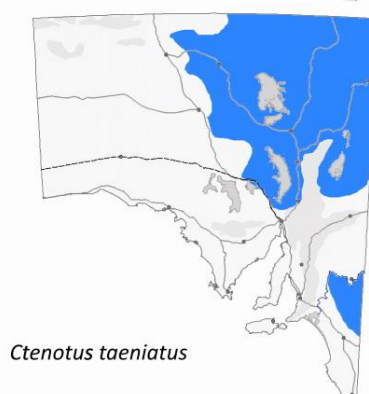
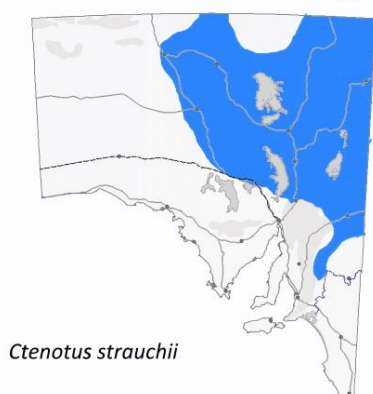
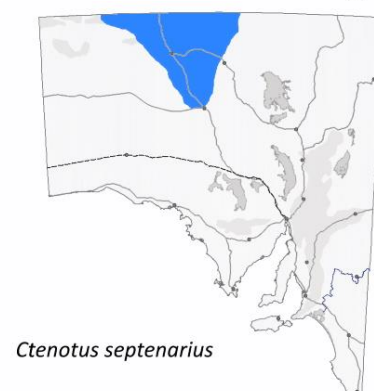
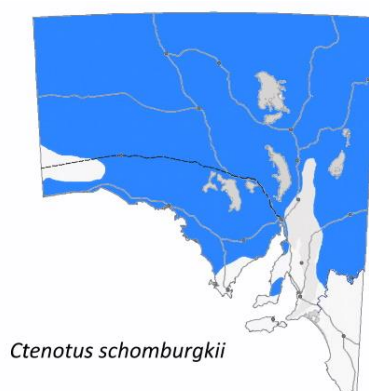
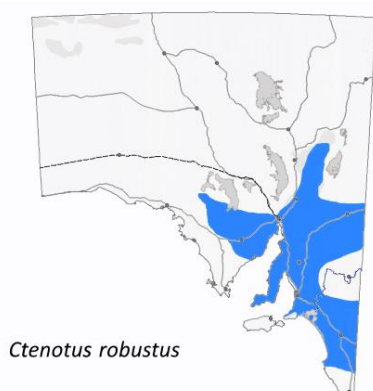
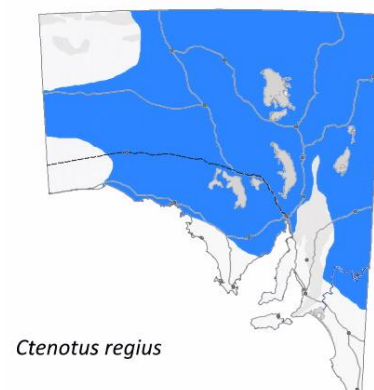
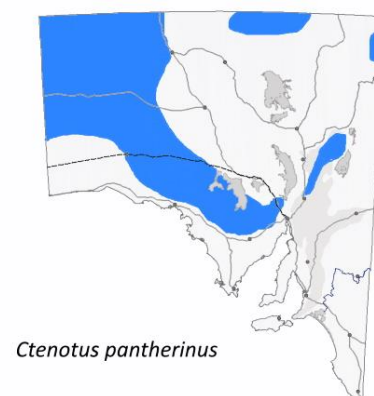
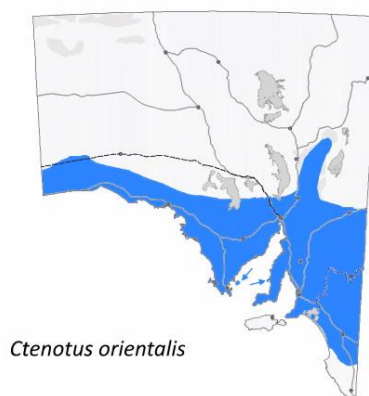
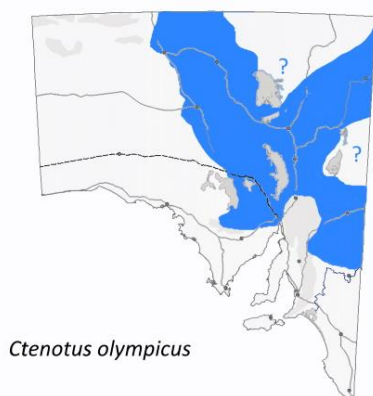
Map* showing place names and geographical features as well as some main roads and major desert tracks, to assist with interpreting the following distribution maps.

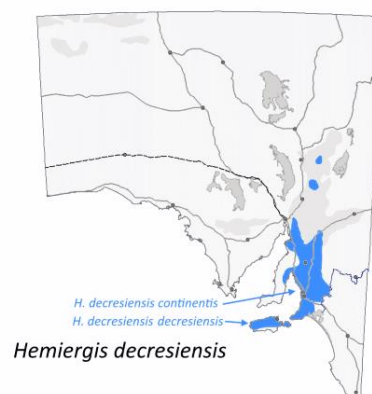
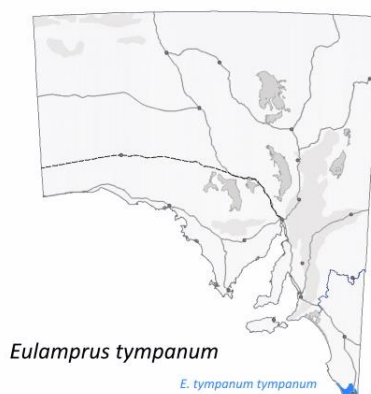
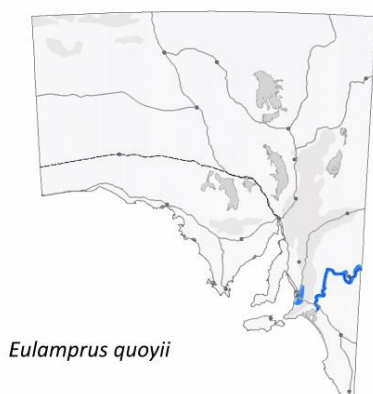
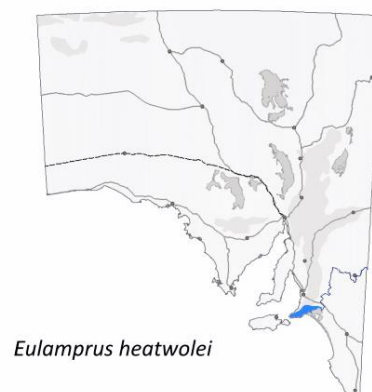
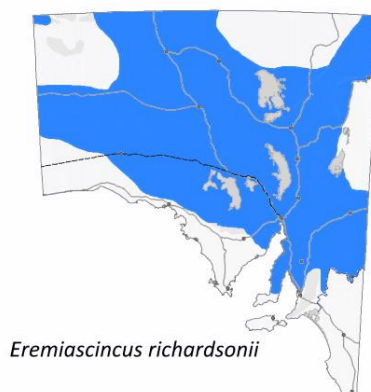
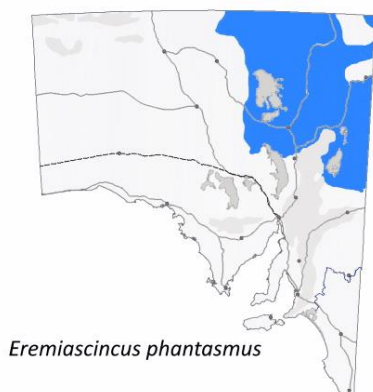
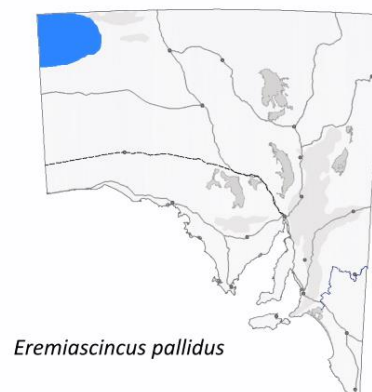
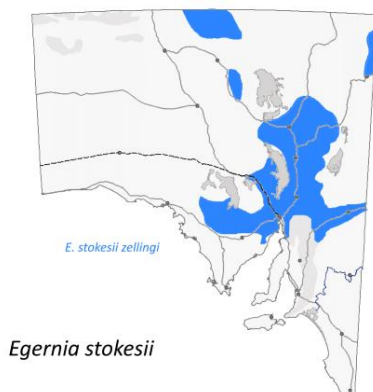
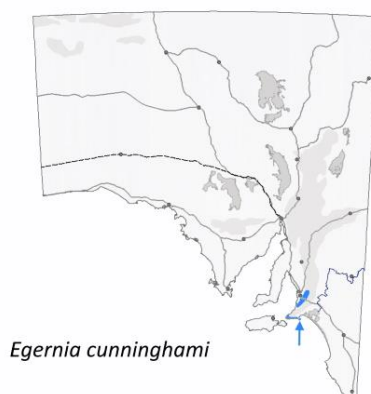
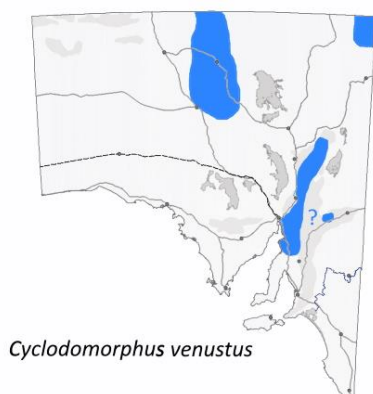
Distribution maps show known and likely occurrence, given suitable habitat. In some cases South Australian populations belong to recognised subspecies, indicated in blue text.

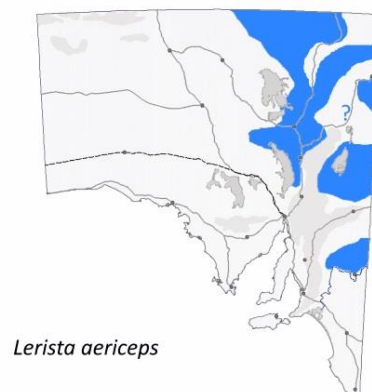
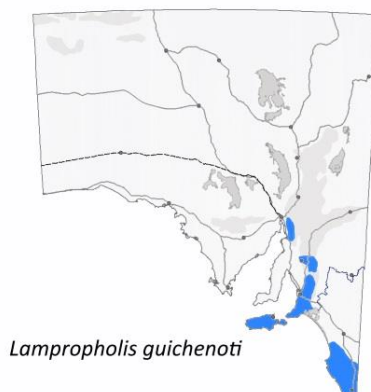
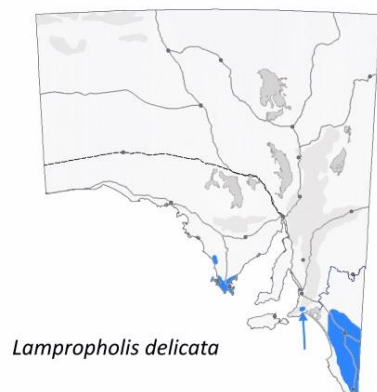
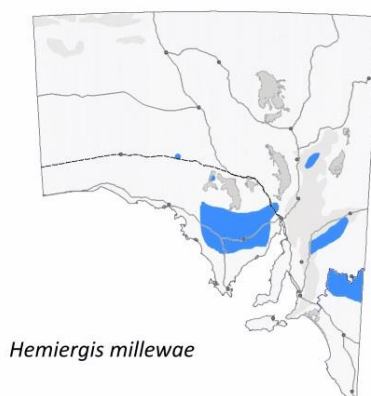
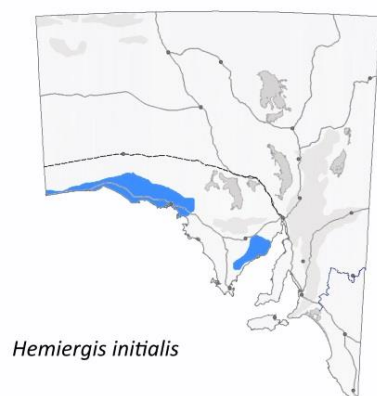
*modified from original by Department of Environment & Water.

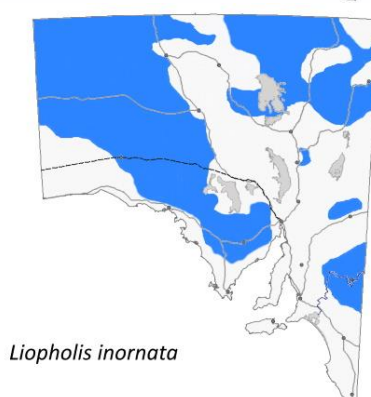
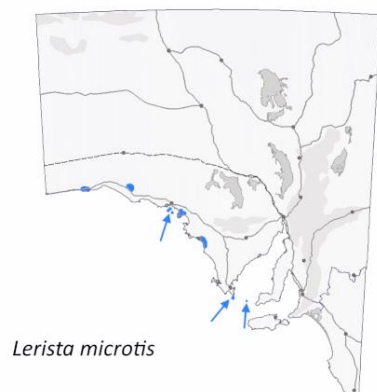
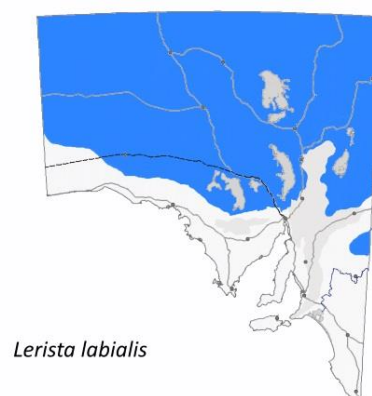


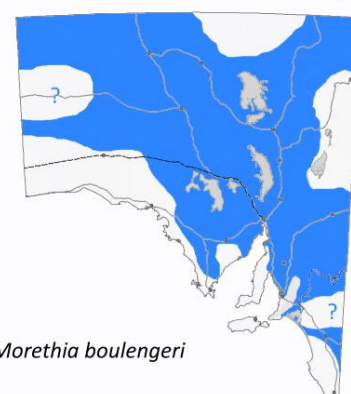
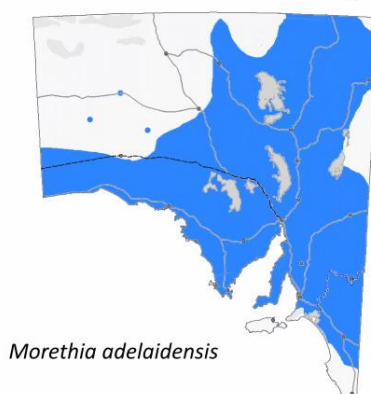
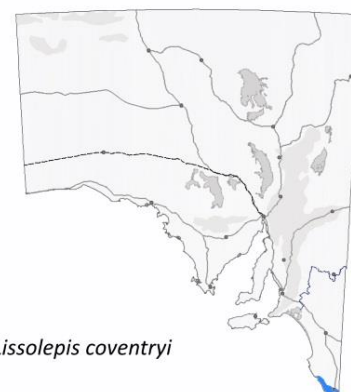
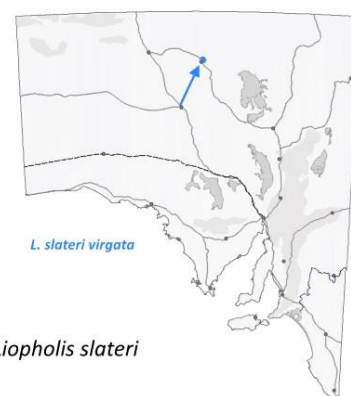
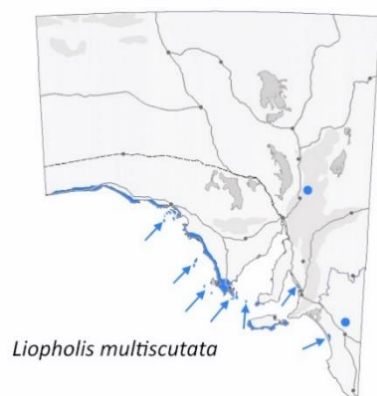














Key to the Skinks of South Australia

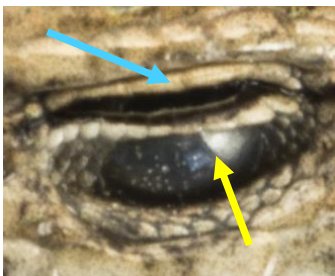
Family Scincidae

Snake-like bodies and tiny legs. A readily noticeable feature of several groups of skinks is a thin snake-like body and very small limbs. Sometimes mistaken for small snakes or legless lizards, identifying these mostly very small species can be difficult.

If you have found a slender, very short-legged skink you can try a rapid identification using the look-up table at the back of this key.

We have also included these lizards in the main keys as well, and you can double check your rapid identification by checking the information in the relevant genus key.

State of the lower eyelid. An important step in the key is distinguishing between eyelids that are moveable but have a central transparent window and eyelids that are immovable and form a transparent spectacle over the eye.

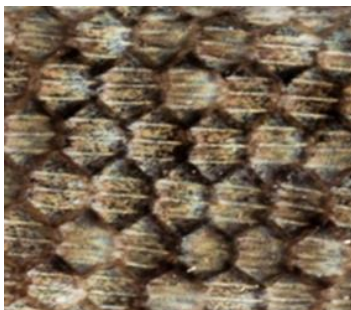
SCALY	WINDOW	SPECTACLE
		
<i>Eulamprus quoyii</i> Lower eyelid movable with opaque scales (yellow), and fissure visible between upper (blue) and lower lids	<i>Lampropholis delicata</i> Lower eyelid a transparent "window" (yellow). Note presence of separate upper eyelid (blue) and elliptical eye shape.	<i>Morethia adelaidensis</i> Lower eyelid permanently closed with a "spectacle" (yellow). Note absence of a separate upper eyelid and the circular eye shape.

It can be difficult to differentiate between the "window" and "spectacle" types of eyelid. One useful thing to look for is eye shape – the species with an immovable spectacle have eyes that are almost perfectly circular in outline, while those with moveable but transparent lower lids have an elliptical eye shape.

1. a. Each dorsal body and tail scale with a sharp, projecting spine. [Egernia](#), part (pg. 40)
- b. Dorsal scales not spiny, but may be keeled or grooved, or completely smooth 2

*Egernia cunninghami*

- 1a. Each dorsal scale with a backward-projecting spine

*Carlia triacantha*

- 1b. Dorsal scales with raised keels

*Pseudemoia pagenstecheri*

- 1b. Dorsal scales smooth

2. a. Head relatively large and distinct from the neck; all limbs short, of similar size, with five fingers and toes of roughly equal length; tail obviously shorter than body; moderate to very large size (greater than 12 cm total length) [Tiliqua](#) (pg. 62)
- b. Not as above 3

*Tiliqua scincoides*

- 2a. Head very distinct from neck

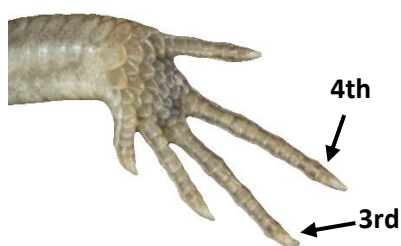
*Cyclodomorphus melanops*

- 2b. Head barely distinct from neck

*Tiliqua adelaidensis*

- 2a. Head distinct and all four limbs similar and with short toes

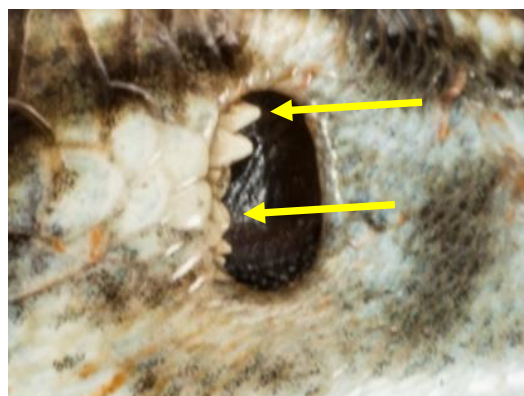
3. a. Medium to large skinks, adult head and body length mostly more than 50 mm ; five fingers and toes; lower eyelid scaly and moveable (eye not visible when lid closed) **4**
- b. Medium to small, sometimes very slender skinks, adult head and body length less than 60 mm; some with fewer than 5 fingers or toes; lower eyelid with a transparent disc ('spectacle'), either moveable or permanently closed **10**
4. a. Limbs very short, not overlapping; fourth toe of hind foot as long as third; [Cyclodomorphus](#) (pg. 39)
- b. Limbs well-developed; fourth toe of hind foot markedly longer than third; **5**

*Cyclodomorphus venustus**Egernia striolata*

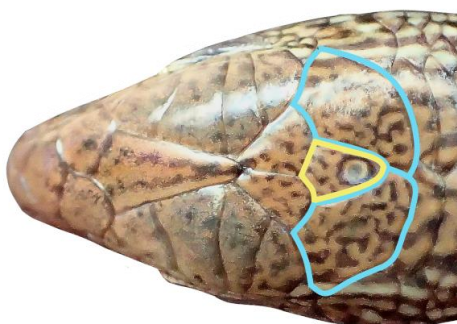
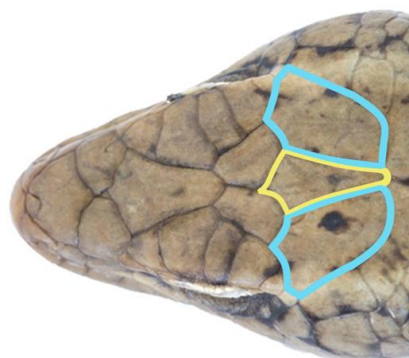
- 4a. Right foot underside: 3rd and 4th toe similar in length
- 4b. Right foot underside: longer 4th toe
5. a. Colour pattern consists of cross-bands, sometimes only [Eremiascincus](#) (pg. 42)
- b. Colour pattern never consisting only of cross-bands **6**

*Eremiascincus richardsonii***5a.** Strongly banded species*Eremiascincus pallidus***5a.** Weakly banded species

6. a. Entire margin of ear opening smooth; confined to humid areas and beside water bodies from Adelaide to the Murray and southeast of SA [Eulamprus](#) (pg. 44)
- b. Ear opening with a fringe of two to five scales (ear lobules) along its front edge; widespread across SA **7**

*Eulamprus quoyii***6a.** Ear opening without fringe*Ctenotus olympicus***6b.** Ear opening with fringe of scales

7. a. Parietal scales in contact behind interparietal scale [Ctenotus](#) (pg. 24)
 b. Parietal scales separated by large interparietal scale **8**

*Ctenotus dux***7a.** Parietals (blue) in contact behind interparietal (yellow)*Liopholis personata***7b.** Parietals (blue) separated by interparietal (yellow)

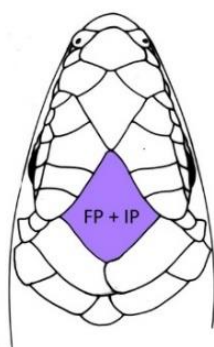
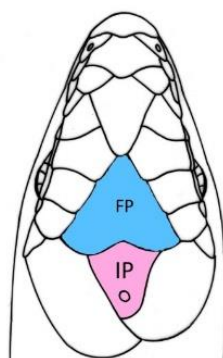
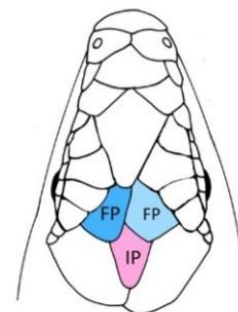
8. a. Scales along edges of eyelids expanded, somewhat flattened, and often creamy to yellow, contrasting with remainder of eyelid scales; body scales smooth, shiny [Liopholis](#) (pg. 52)
 b. Scales along edges of eyelids not expanded, and not especially prominent; body scales varied, smooth, dull, or spiny **9**

*Liopholis inornata***8a.** Edges of eyelids expanded, cream-coloured*Egernia striolata***8b.** Eyelids less distinct

9. a. Only four rows of highly polished dorsal scales, striped in black and yellowish-tan; lower south-eastern swamps *Lissolepis coventryi* Swamp Skink
- b. Six or more rows of dorsal scales usually with shallow grooves or ridges *Egernia* part (pg. 40)

*Lissolepis coventryi*

- 9a. Four rows of dorsal scales (brown-centred, black-edged)
10. a. Skull roof with a single large diamond-shaped scale (interparietal and frontoparietal head scales fused); five fingers and toes; lower eyelid forms an immovable 'spectacle' over the eye 11
- b. Skull roof with either two or three large plates (interparietal distinct from the frontoparietals, which may be either paired or fused); limbs may have fewer than five fingers or toes; lower eyelid moveable with a disc, or an immovable 'spectacle' 12

*Morethia boulengeri**Acritoscincus duperreyi**Lerista arenicola*

10a. Interparietal and frontoparietals fused

10b. Interparietal distinct from fused frontoparietals

10b. Interparietal distinct from paired frontoparietals

(Illustrations: Delma Corazon)

11. a. Head and body flattened; often climbing on vertical tree trunks, rock faces and fences; two or three upper eyelid scales enlarged to form a 'visor' above the eye *Cryptoblepharus* (pg. 22)
- b. Head and body not flattened; mainly on the ground or fallen wood and litter; upper eyelid scales not projecting, hidden under eyebrow (supraciliary) scales *Morethia* (pg. 57)



Cryptoblepharus australis

11a. Strongly flattened head and body



Morethia boulengeri

11b. Deeper head and body



Cryptoblepharus australis

11a. Upper eyelid scales enlarged to form a 'visor'



Morethia adelaidensis

11b. Upper eyelid scales hidden under eyebrow

- 12. a.** Four fingers and five toes **13**
b. Five fingers and toes, or fewer than five toes **14**

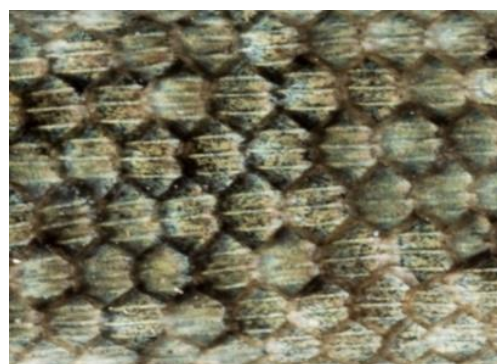
- 13. a.** Dorsal scales smooth; slender with small legs and dark lateral stripe; very small, max SVL less than 35 mm **Menetia greyii**
Common Dwarf Skink

- b.** Dorsal scales strongly keeled; strongly built with relatively long legs; no lateral stripe but breeding males brilliantly coloured with iridescent green head and red sides; SVL up to 55 mm **Carlia triacantha**
Desert Rainbow Skink



Menetia greyii

13a. Smooth dorsal scales



Carlia triacantha

13b. Strongly keeled dorsal scales

*Menetia greyii*

13a. Slender body with dark lateral stripe

*Carlia triacantha* (preserved specimen, colour enhanced)

13b. 'Chunky' body without a dark lateral stripe. Brightly coloured males.

- 14. a.** Five fingers and toes; lower eyelid an immoveable 'spectacle' . . . **15**
- b.** Either fewer than five fingers and toes, or if five fingers and toes, then lower eyelid moveable **17**
- 15. a.** Strong lateral pattern, a series of squarish dark brown blotches and a white mid-lateral stripe running between eye and hind limb; juvenile tail colour same as body **Notoscincus ornatus**
Ornate Big-eyed Skink
- b.** Sides unpatterned or with weak linear pattern caused by dark corners of the lateral scales; juveniles with bright red tail colouring **16**

*Notoscincus ornatus*

15a. Strong lateral pattern

16. a. Adult almost plain beige, or with a back pattern of longitudinal grey lines on a lighter grey to beige background colour; eye not ringed in white; juvenile with reddish tail, adult males with orange snout; frontoparietal single ***Austroblepharus kinghorni***
Blacksoil Skink
- b. Adult uniformly dark olive brown above, with contrasting white eye ring; juvenile with bright red tail, but adult tail colour same as body; frontoparietals paired. ***Proablepharus reginae***
Silvereye Skink



Austroblepharus kinghorni (Matt Launer)

16a. No eye ring, body pale beige



Proablepharus reginae (juv)

16b. White eye ring, body dark olive (red tail lost in adults)



Austroblepharus kinghorni

16a. Frontoparietal single



Proablepharus reginae

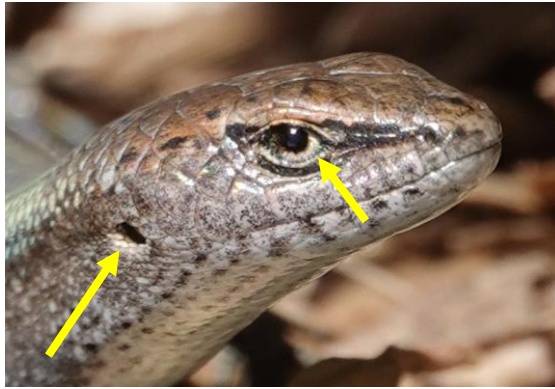
16b. Frontoparietals paired

17. a. Ear opening absent, replaced by a scaly depression; snout bluntly rounded in side view; iris of eye blackish, indistinguishable from pupil ***Hemiergis*** (pg. 44)
- b. Ear opening present (may be tiny), and no scaly depression; if ear very small, snout conical or wedge-shaped in side view (Fig. 17b, *Lerista*); iris of eye may be paler than pupil **18**



Hemiergis decresiensis

17a. No ear opening – ear indicated by a scaly depression; iris black, pupil not distinguishable

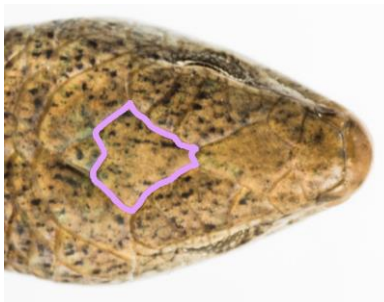

Lampropholis guichenoti

17b. Ear opening obvious; iris paler than pupil

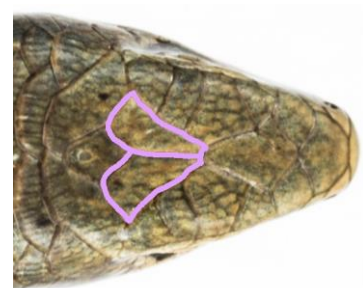

Lerista punctatovittata

17b. Ear opening tiny, or covered by scales; snout wedge-shaped

- 18. a.** Frontoparietal single; five fingers and toes **19**
b. Frontoparietals paired or single; if single, fewer than five toes . . **20**


Lampropholis delicata

18a. Single frontoparietal

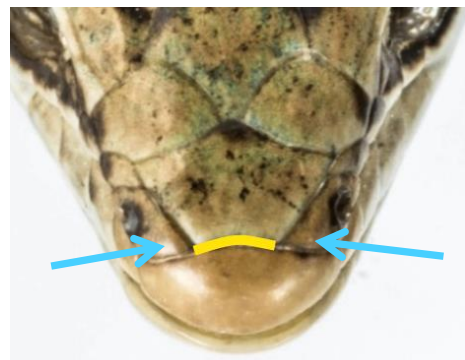

Pseudemoia entrecasteauxii

18b. Paired frontoparietals

- 19. a.** Small, maximum snout-vent length usually less than 45 mm; rostral-frontonasal suture relatively wide; nasal scales small, widely spaced, nostrils opening sideways [Lampropholis](#) (pg. 45)
b. Larger, maximum snout-vent length 70 mm; rostral-frontonasal suture relatively narrow; nasal scales moderate-sized, nostrils angled a little upwards [Acritoscincus](#) (pg. 20)

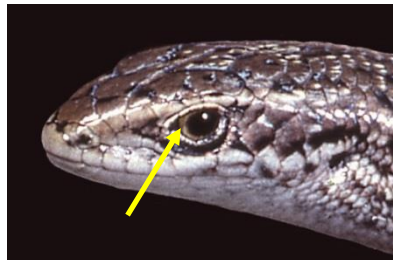
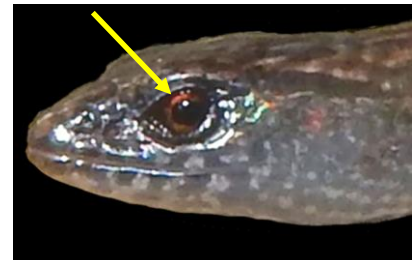

Lampropholis delicata

19a. Broad, straight rostral-frontonasal contact (yellow), widely spaced nasal scales (blue)


Acritoscincus trilineatus

19b. Narrow, convex rostral-frontonasal contact (yellow), more closely spaced nasal scales (blue)

20. a. Eye uniformly blackish, the iris indistinguishable from pupil; upper jaw may overhang lower jaw and front limbs may be greatly reduced or absent; middle pair of preanal scales twice as large as adjacent preanals [Lerista](#) (pg. 46)
- b. Iris of eye brown to orange, distinct from pupil; upper jaw not overhanging lower jaw, front limbs always present; middle pair of preanal scales not strongly enlarged **21**

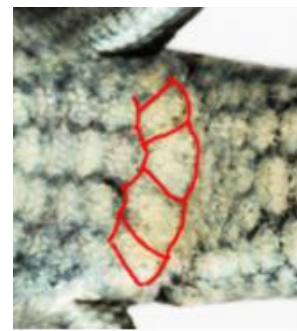
*Lerista bougainvillii**Pseudemoia pagenstecheri**Anepischetosia maccoyi*

20a. Iris black, not distinct from pupil

20b. Iris distinct from pupil

*Hemiergis peronii*

20a. Middle pair of preanal scales much larger than adjacent scales

*Pseudemoia entrecasteauxii*

20b. All preanal scales similar in size

21. a. Limbs and body normally proportioned, five fingers and toes . . . [Pseudemoia](#) (pg. 60)
- b. Limbs small and weak, body slender; number of fingers and toes variable in SA specimens, usually 4, sometimes 5 or 3 ***Anepischetosia maccoyi***
Salamander Skink

*Pseudemoia baudini*

21a. Limbs well-developed

*Anepischetosia maccoyi*

21b. Limbs small and weak

Key to the South Australian species of *Acritoscincus*

1. a. Light midlateral and dorsolateral stripes and well-developed black vertebral stripe present; SE SA ***A. duperreyi***
Eastern Three-lined Skink
- b. No light midlateral stripe; pale dorsolateral stripe weak or absent; black vertebral stripe usually absent but may have several narrow or incomplete dark dorsal lines or dashes; southern Eyre Peninsula ***A. trilineatus***
Western Three-lined Skink



A. duperreyi (male)

1a. Strongly striped pattern



A. trilineatus

1b. Almost no pattern, but may have fine dorsal lines or dashes

Key to the South Australian species of *Cryptoblepharus*

1. a. Dorsal pattern includes only alternating stripes, with no dorsal light and dark speckling; scales on the soles of the feet dark pigmented, smooth, and rounded ***C. pulcher***
Bight Snake-eye Skink
- b. Dorsal pattern includes light to heavy pattern of light and dark speckling; soles of the feet whitish, with the scales at the base of the toes triangular, projecting and sharply pointed **2**



C. pulcher

- 1a.** Dorsal pattern of prominent stripes without significant speckling



C. australis

- 1b.** Dorsal pattern with light and dark speckling



C. pulcher

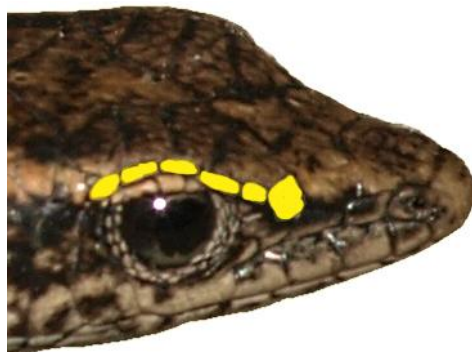
- 1a.** Soles of feet with blackish, smooth, rounded scales



C. australis

- 1b.** Soles of feet with pale, pointed, triangular scales

2. a. Most often six supraciliaries; subdigital lamellae on 4th toe smooth-edged when viewed laterally ***C. australis***
Inland Snake-eye Skink
- b. Most often five supraciliaries; majority have subdigital scales that are keeled (sharp-pointed apex) when viewed laterally, but some have smooth-edged subdigital scales . . . **3**



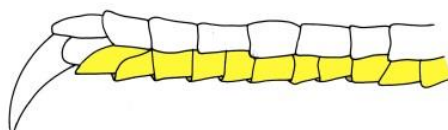
C. australis

2a. Six supraciliaries

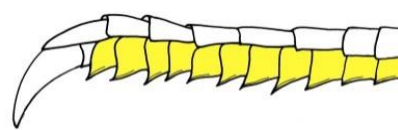


C. pannosus

2b. Five supraciliaries



2a. Underside of toes with blunt scales



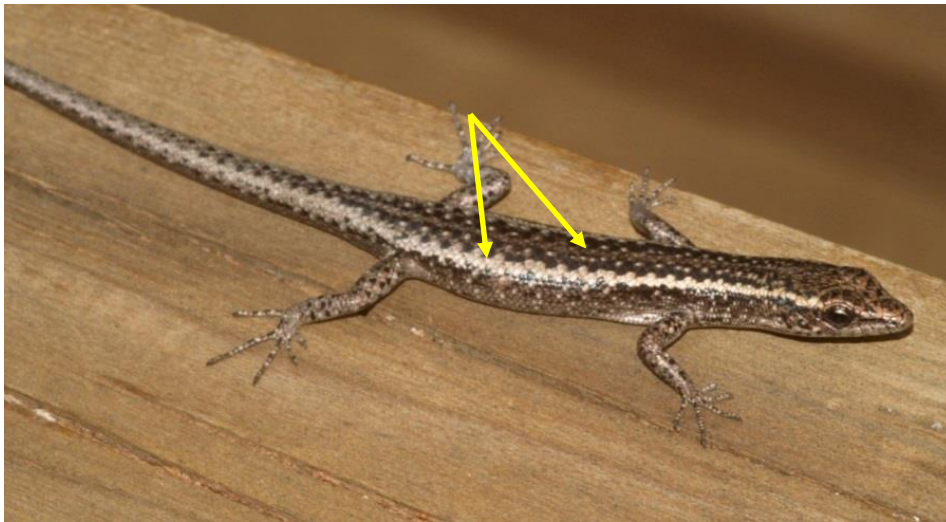
2b. Underside of toes with spiny scales

(Illustrations: Delma Corazon)

3. a. Usually dusty grey to light brown with weak dorsal speckling; and distinct, moderately straight-edged pale dorsolateral stripes; north of the Barrier Highway ***C. ochrus***
Pale Snake-eye Skink
- b. Usually strongly speckled blackish and light grey, giving a chequerboard effect; light dorsolateral stripes ragged-edged due to darker scales; south of the Barrier Highway ***C. pannosus***
Ragged Snake-eye Skink

*C. ochrus*

3a. Relatively well-defined dorsolateral and lateral stripes and weakly speckled dorsal pattern

*C. pannosus*

3b. Ragged-edged, pale dorsolateral stripe and heavily dark-speckled back pattern

Note:

Apart from *C. pulcher*, the other SA species of *Cryptoblepharus* can be difficult to differentiate from one another. The numbers of supraciliaries described in the key are based upon usual values for each species. *C. australis* occasionally has 5 and *C. pannosus* 6 supraciliaries; check left and right sides as atypical counts are generally only on one side. For *C. ochrus* many will have smooth subdigital lamellae, but some will have some basal spiny subdigital lamellae. Geographical location can assist in resolving identity.

Key to the South Australian species of *Ctenotus*

1. a. Body pattern composed entirely of black-edged white spots arranged in rows along the body *C. pantherinus*
Leopard Ctenotus
- b. Body pattern includes some striped patterning (a few species may be almost completely plain) 2



C. pantherinus

- 1a. Body pattern composed entirely of black-edged white spots



C. robustus

- 1b. Body pattern includes contrasting dark and pale stripes



C. inornatus

- 1b. Striping present but poorly contrasting

2. a. Body pattern composed entirely of strongly contrasting longitudinal stripes (*C. ariadnae* has lines that break into spots on the sides of the neck; some *C. piankai* have a few pale flecks in the dark lateral stripe). 3
- b. Body pattern includes both stripes and longitudinal series of spots on the sides (fig 1b, *C. robustus*); (pattern may be poorly contrasting; some *C. euclae* completely lack lateral spots) . . . 10

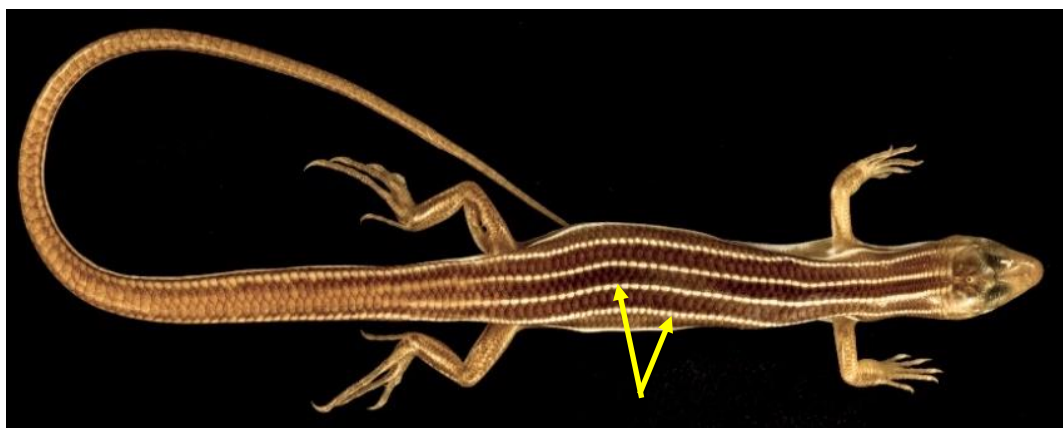
*C. atlas*

- 2a.** Body pattern entirely of contrasting longitudinal stripes

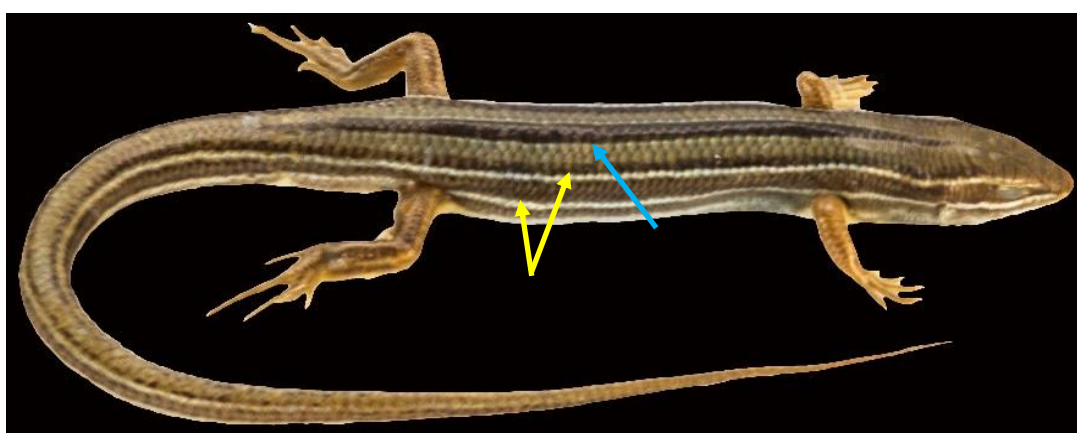
*C. orientalis*

- 2b.** Body pattern includes both stripes and series of spots

3. a. Back and sides with only six dark-edged whitish lines 4
- b. Back and sides with eight or more pale lines 5
4. a. All six light stripes are about equal in colour and width; intervening zones uniformly dark brown; midlateral light line stops at ear opening ***C. piankai***
Coarse-sand Ctenotus
- b. Dorsolateral and midlateral light stripes more prominent than the dorsal pair, which separate a blackish vertebral stripe from pale grey-brown laterodorsal zones; midlateral light line runs across ear opening to the nostril ***C. joanae***
Blacksoil Ctenotus


C. piankai

4a. Six light body stripes equal in colour and width


C. joanae

4b. More prominent light dorsolateral and midlateral stripes (yellow arrows) compared to the thin, light paravertebral stripes (blue arrow)


C. piankai

4a. Light midlateral stripe stops at ear opening

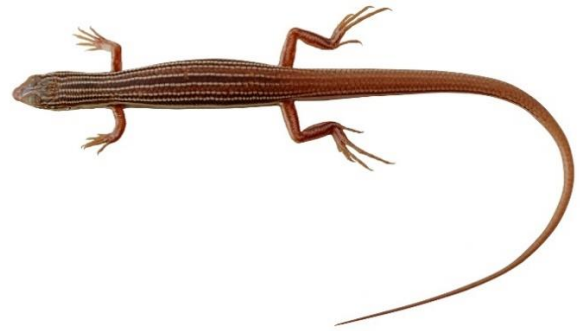

C. joanae

4b. Light midlateral stripe runs across ear opening to the nostril

- | | | | |
|----|----|---|---|
| 5. | a. | Eight light stripes on the body | 6 |
| | b. | Ten or more light stripes along body | 7 |
| 6. | a. | Tail blue-grey to bright blue; basal subcaudal scales with black markings most obvious on outer edges; max. SVL 48 mm | <i>C. calurus</i>
Blue-tailed Ctenotus |
| | b. | Tail reddish; basal subcaudal unmarked ; max. SVL 60 mm | <i>C. leae</i>
Centralian Coppertail Ctenotus |



6a. Tail blue
C. calurus



6b. Tail sandy red
C. leae



6a. Scales underneath tail with black markings
C. calurus



6b. Scales underneath tail unmarked
C. leae

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>7.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. 10 light lines along body (fig 2a)</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b. 12 or more light lines along body</p> <p>8.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. Adult back pattern consists of relatively wide tan stripes that get broader with age</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b. Adult back pattern consists of very narrow sandy or straw-coloured lines that remain narrow throughout life</p> | <p><i>C. atlas</i>
Southern Spinifex
Ctenotus</p> <p>8</p> <p><i>C. dux</i>
Narrow-lined
Ctenotus</p> <p>9</p> |
|---|--|

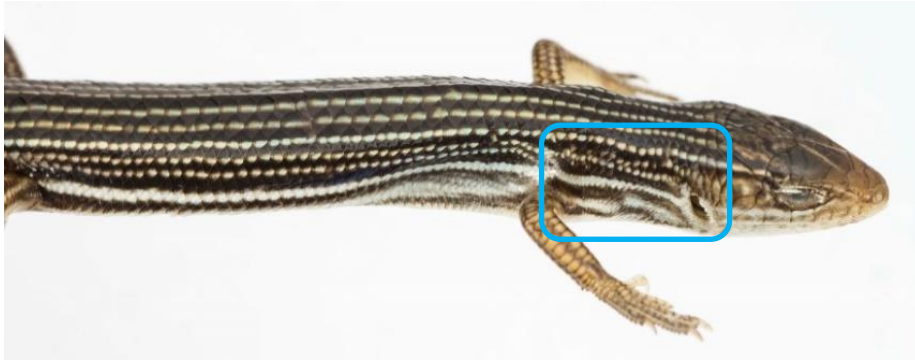


8a. Juvenile; back with narrowly separated tan stripes (tan stripes become broader and the left and right pair each run together in older animals)
C. dux

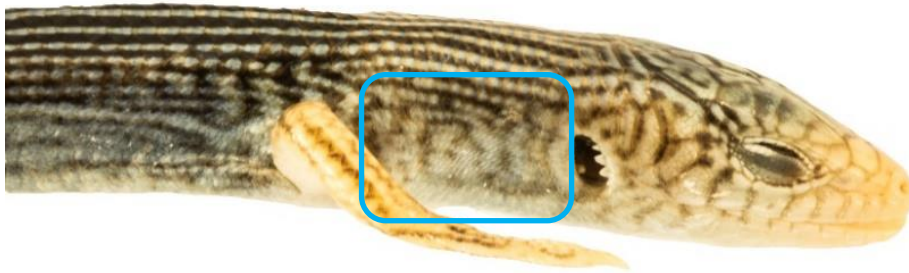


8b. Back with narrow straw-coloured lines at all ages
C. ariadnae

9. a. Striped lateral pattern continues to neck to the level of the ear. ***C. quattuordecimlineatus***
Many-lined
Ctenotus
- b. Striped lateral pattern breaks up into spots on the neck ***C. ariadnae***
Pinstriped Ctenotus

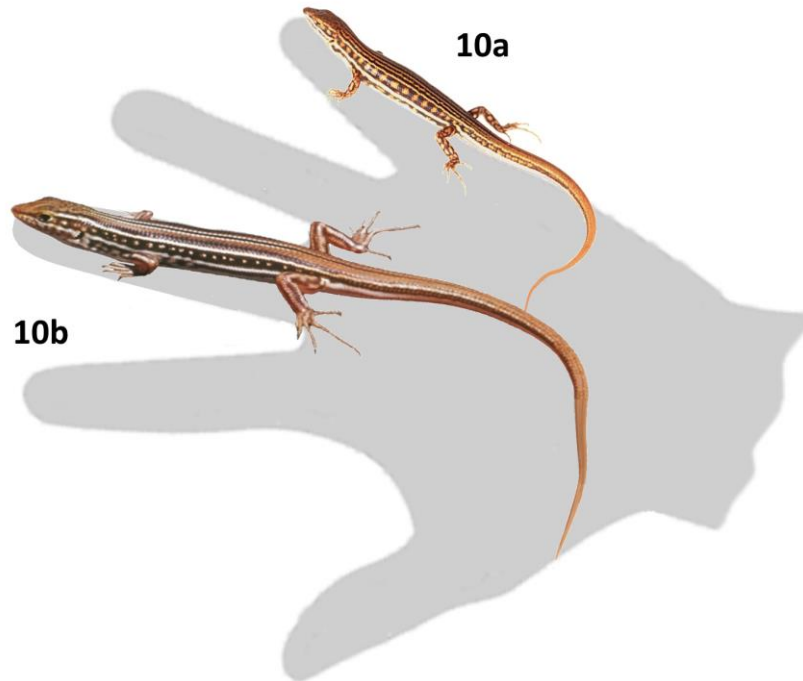
*C. quattuordecimlineatus*

9a. Lateral striped pattern continues onto side of neck

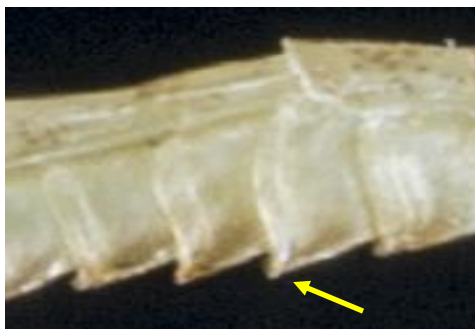
*C. ariadnae*

9b. Lateral striped pattern breaks into spots and blotches on side of neck

10. a. Small species, maximum snout-vent length less than 55 mm (head-and-body less than the length of a human little finger); scales on underside of toes (subdigital lamellae) each with sharp-pointed apex **11**
- b. Medium to large species, maximum snout-vent length 75 mm or more; scales on underside of toes (subdigital lamellae) smooth or bluntly pointed **16**



10. Relative adult sizes of *Ctenotus* species



C. leae

10a. Underside of toes with sharp-edged, pointed scales



C. regius

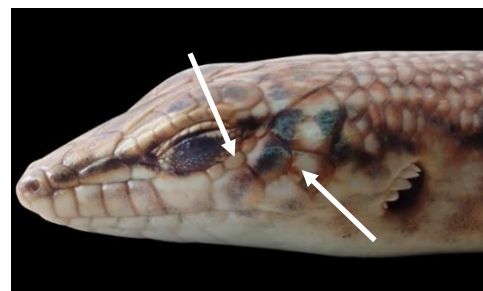
10b. Underside of toes with bluntly pointed scales

11. a. Upper lip scales with well-defined light stripe running from under the eye to the ear; lower rear margin of eye blackish 12
- b. No continuous lip stripe from under the eye to the ear; lower rear margin of eye whitish; scales behind eyes often with a series of white dark-edged blotches 13



C. schomburgkii

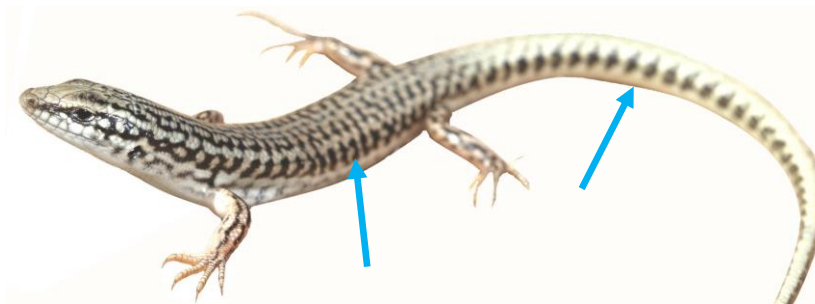
11a. White lip stripe; dark scales below rear margin of eye



C. taeniatus

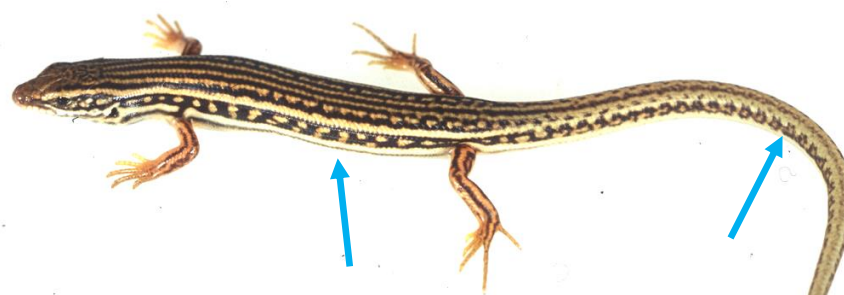
11b. Pale crescent below rear margin of eye; white blotches from upper lips to temples

12. a. Dark lateral stripe usually broken up on the body, but if continuous encloses small irregular light brown spots; breaks up on the sides of the tail into a series of squarish blotches; soles of feet yellow ***C. strauchii***
Short-legged
Ctenotus
- b. Dark lateral stripe always well-defined and encloses a single series or large orange blotches; extends on to tail as a continuous stripe; soles of feet white ***C. schomburgkii***
Common Sandplain
Ctenotus



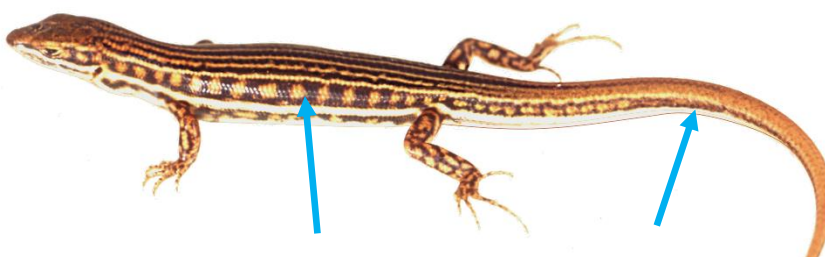
C. strauchii (Photo: Aaron Fenner)

- 12a. Dark lateral stripe often broken into a series of blotches on the body and always on the tail



C. strauchii

- 12a. Dark lateral stripe, if continuous, encloses small irregular brown spots and breaks up on the sides of the tail into a series of blotches



C. schomburgkii

- 12b. Dark lateral stripe always continuous, encloses large orange "portholes" and extends on to tail as continuous stripe
13. a. Dark upper lateral stripe well-developed, usually continuous, with few or no pale spots; coast and adjacent inland of Eyre Peninsula and the Great Australian Bight. ***C. euclae***
Bight Coast
Ctenotus
- b. Upper lateral stripe if continuous has numerous pale spots, but in most specimens the stripe is reduced to a series of dark blotches; central and northern South Australia **14**



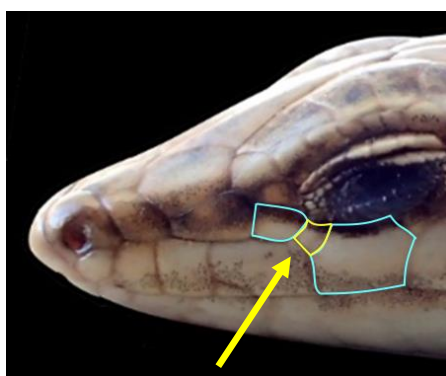
C. euclae

- 13a.** Dark lateral stripe with few or no pale blotches
- 14. a.** Seven straight-edged, continuous dark dorsal lines; presubocular scale present; vertebral stripe continues along length of original tail. ***C. kutjupa***
Small Sand Ctenotus
- b.** Back pattern variable, but if straight-edged, continuous dark dorsal lines present, they number only five; presubocular scale absent; vertebral stripe fades on first quarter of the tail **15**



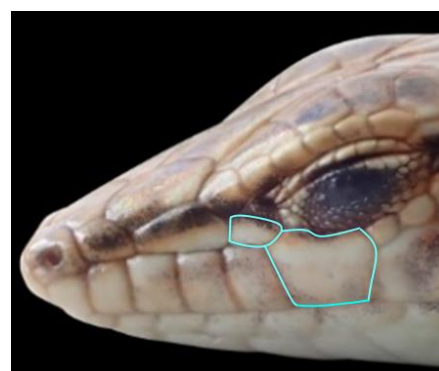
C. kutjupa (Photo: Ryan Ellis)

- 14a.** Dorsal stripe prominent on tail; seven narrow dark dorsal lines



C. schomburgkii

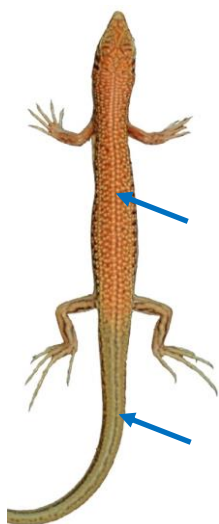
- 14a.** Presubocular scale (yellow) separates preocular from the lip scale under the eye



C. taeniatus

- 14b.** No presubocular scale; preocular contacts the lip scale under the eye

15. a. Tail greenish brown, body sandy orange; found west of the Stuart Highway; lateral pattern broken and dorsal pattern weakly contrasting ***C. brooksi***
Sandhill Ctenotus
- b. Tail same colour as body, pale beige to sandy brown; found east of the Stuart Highway; variable body pattern, weakly to strongly developed ***C. taeniatus***
Eyrean Ctenotus

*C. brooksi*

- 15a.** Usual colouring; orange body, greenish tail

*C. taeniatus*

- 15b.** Usual colouring; body and tail colour similar

*C. taeniatus*

- 15b.** Striped, chequered and reduced patterns seen in *C. taeniatus*

16. a. Dorsally a pale yellowish brown background colour with a strong pattern of paler and darker dots and dashes sometimes tending to align; irregular greyish vertebral stripe present or absent ***C. astarte***
Ashy Downs Ctenotus
- b. Colour pattern not as above; straight black vertebral stripe present **17**

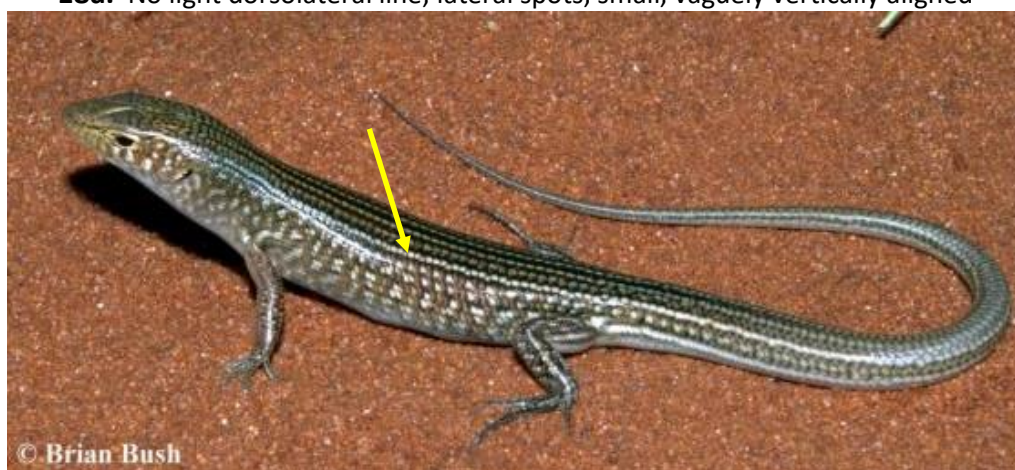
*C. astarte*

- 16a.** Irregular greyish vertebral stripe with a dorsal pattern of pale speckles and darker dashes

17. a. Back pattern of five narrow black lines on a reddish-brown background continuous to base of tail; side pattern of numerous light spots, no trace of any lateral striping; northwest corner of SA 18
- b. If back pattern with five black lines, the pattern fades towards the tail; side pattern in some species may include a partial or complete white lateral stripe 19
18. a. No light dorsolateral stripe; sides dark brown, with numerous very small pale dots randomly scattered or sometimes tending to align vertically; very large size, can reach 120 mm SVL ***C. grandis***
Giant Desert Ctenotus
- b. Light dorsolateral stripe present; sides light grey to tan, with scattered whitish spots or small blotches that tend to form parallel longitudinal series; moderate size, to 70 mm SVL ***C. hanloni***
Nimble Ctenotus

*C. grandis*

18a. No light dorsolateral line; lateral spots, small, vaguely vertically aligned

*C. hanloni*

18b. A light dorsolateral line; lateral spots tending to longitudinal series

19. a. Sides of head usually with weak or no pattern apart from contrasting whitish eyelids; body pattern variable, from well-developed stripes to almost plain; lateral spotted pattern variable, sometimes (NW Ranges) well-developed but usually poorly contrasting or absent; belly usually pale lemon yellow. . . . ***C. inornatus***
Brown Ctenotus
- b. Sides of the head and under the eyes with continuation of the lateral pattern; well-developed body pattern including a lateral pattern of light spots on a dark background; belly white to cream
..... 20



C. inornatus

19a. Weakly patterned body, plain face



C. inornatus

19a. Strongly patterned body, plain face



C. robustus

19b. Well-developed body pattern extending to sides of head and under the eyes

20. a. Two or three pairs of black lines either side of the vertebral stripe, starting on the nape and variably extending along the anterior half of the back and fading before the hips ***C. septenarius***
Gibber Ctenotus
- b. No black paravertebral lines **21**


C. septenarius

20a. Black paravertebral lines on the nape of neck fading towards the tail

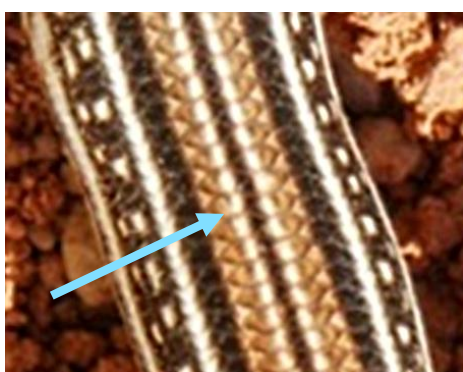
21. a. White midlateral stripe continuous, straight-edged, in most specimens running forward at least as far as the ear; black vertebral stripe with distinct narrow white to pale yellow margins **22**
- b. White midlateral stripe if present, wavy-edged or fades or breaks up before reaching the armpit; pale margins to black vertebral stripe present or absent **23**


C. regius

21a. White lateral stripe straight-edged, continuous


C. orientalis

21b. White lateral stripe wavy, often broken

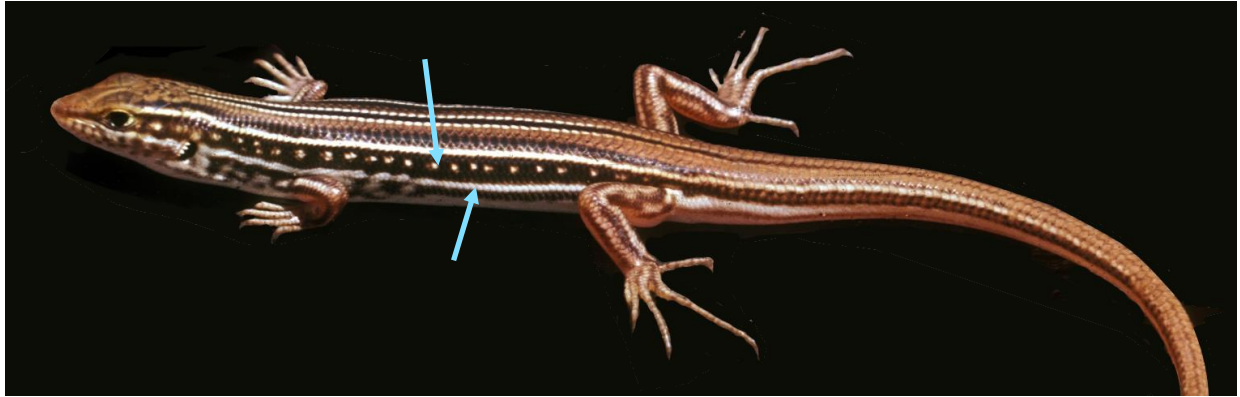

C. regius

21a. Distinct white margins to black vertebral stripe

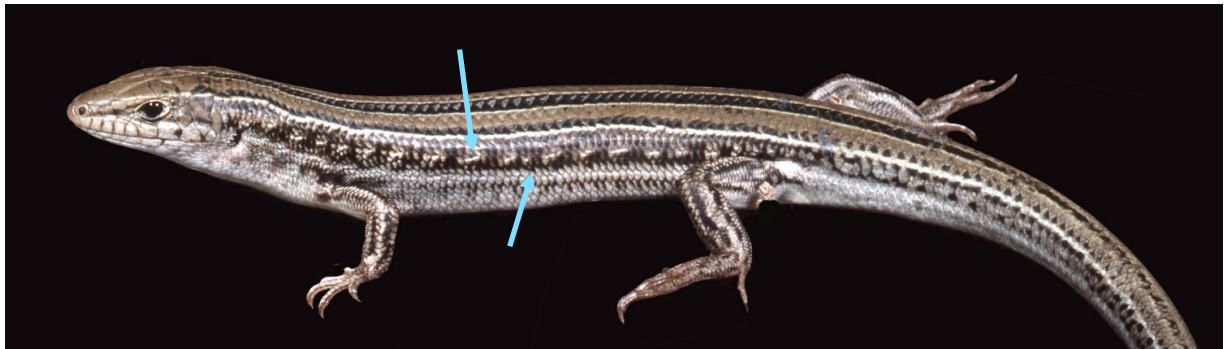

C. leonhardii

21b. Vertebral stripe only outlined by the pale background brownish colouring

22. a. Sandy orange and black above; white spots in the black upper lateral zone small and intense, sometimes in more than one row; midlateral stripe sharply defined; max SVL 75 mm ***C. regius***
Eastern Desert
Ctenotus
- b. Shades of brown above; whitish spots in the black upper lateral zone relatively large, only ever in a single series; in larger specimens lateral spots and midlateral stripe greyish and lacking definition; max. SVL to 115 mm ***C. robustus***
Eastern Striped
Skink

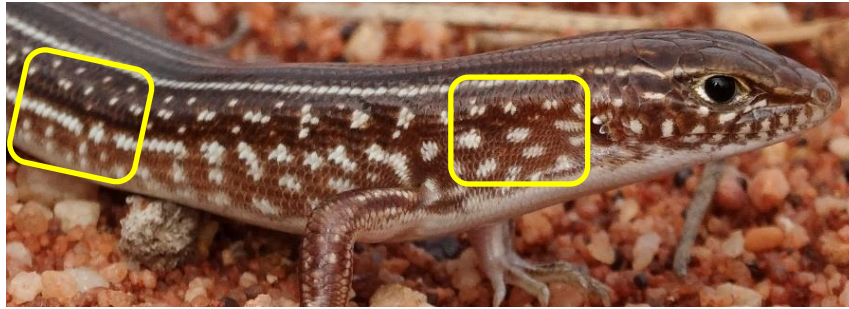

C. regius

- 22a. Sandy orange; small intense white lateral spots and midlateral stripe sharply defined


C. robustus

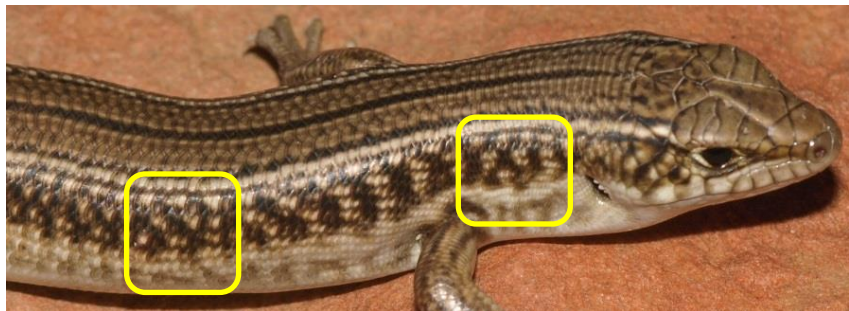
- 22b. Earth brown; whitish lateral spots larger, irregular and midlateral stripe with soft outlines

23. a. Sides of neck and ear region differently patterned to the lateral pattern of the mid-body, grey to maroon with relatively large white spots 24
- b. Sides of neck and ear region patterned with a continuation of the lateral body pattern 25



C. leonhardii

23a. Neck pattern different to lateral pattern of mid-body



C. olympicus

23b. Neck pattern same as lateral pattern of mid-body

- 24. a.** Dark laterodorsal zone encloses a series of pale spots or dashes . *C. greeri*
Greer's Ctenotus
- b.** Dark laterodorsal zone without pale markings *C. leonhardii*
Common Desert Ctenotus



C. greeri

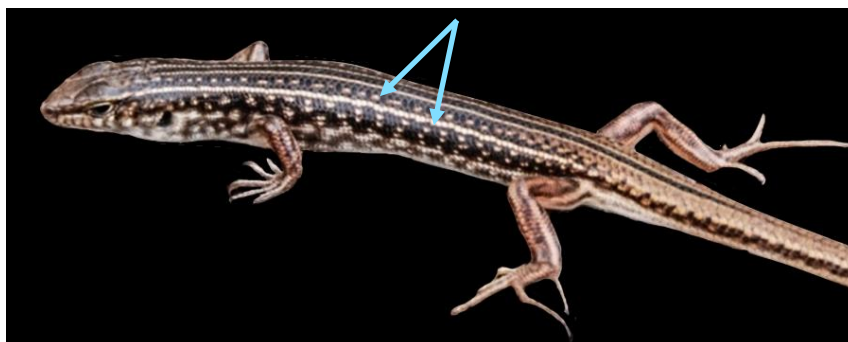
24a. Black laterodorsal stripe contains a row of pale spots



C. leonhardii

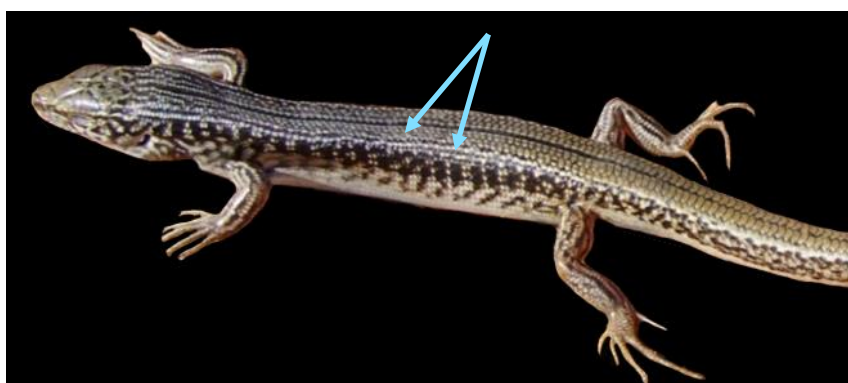
24b. Laterodorsal spots absent

25. a. Dark laterodorsal zone completely encloses a series of pale spots or dashes; straight-edged pale dorsolateral line well-developed . **C. orientalis**
Spotted Ctenotus
- b. Back pattern variable; if light laterodorsal spots present, they are not completely enclosed by the relatively narrow dark laterodorsal zone; pale dorsolateral line may be present and distinct, absent, diffuse, or only obvious anteriorly **C. olympicus**
Saltbush Ctenotus



C. orientalis

25a. Black laterodorsal zone encloses a row of pale spots



C. olympicus

25b. Laterodorsal spots weak or absent

Key to the South Australian species of *Cyclodomorphus*

1. a. Body uniformly coloured, predominantly olive or greenish; juveniles of some populations with dark head and (often) white spotted body; neck without dark markings ***C. melanops***
Spinifex Slender
Bluetongue
- b. Body predominantly grey-brown to beige with strong black markings on the sides of the neck and fore-body forming a series of vertical bars; northern populations (Lake Eyre Basin) almost unpatterned apart from neck markings; southern populations (Flinders Ranges) more strongly patterned, additionally having white-edged dark blotches forming transverse bands on body and tail ***C. venustus***
Saltbush Slender
Bluetongue

*C. melanops*

1a. Adult, uniformly coloured

*C. melanops*

1a. Juvenile, with a darker head & spotted body

*C. venustus**C. venustus*

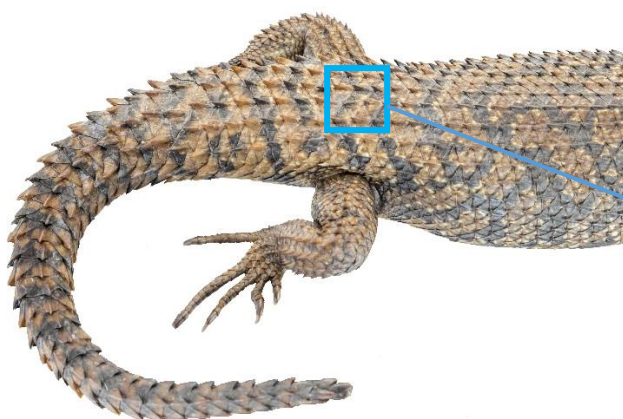
1b. Weakly marked northern form; dorsal & lateral views, showing black markings on neck

*C. venustus*

1b. Strongly patterned southern form

Key to the South Australian species of *Egernia*

1. a. Each dorsal body and caudal scale with a sharp, projecting spine 2
- b. Dorsal scales not spiny 3



E. cunninghami

1a. Dorsal & caudal scales with sharp projecting spine

2. a. Tail cylindrical and tapering to a slender tip, about as long as the body ***E. cunninghami***
Cunningham's Skink
- b. Tail broad, blunt and flattened, much shorter than body ***E. stokesii***
Gidgee Skink



E. cunninghami

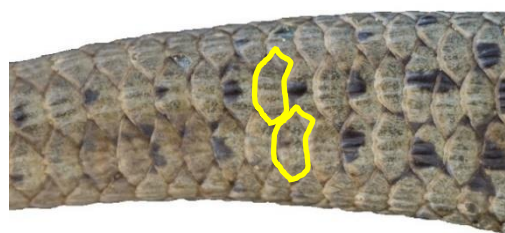
2a. Tail cylindrical & tapering to a slender tip (see also fig 1a, above)



E. stokesii

2b. Tail broad, blunt & flattened

3. a. Tree-dwelling populations never with rusty neck and shoulders; scales along mid-dorsal region of tail in a single row, each scale about twice as wide as adjacent scales; eastern SA, west to the Gawler Ranges; mainly rock-dwelling where it overlaps with *E. richardi* ***E. striolata***
Tree Skink
- b. Tree dwelling populations usually with a rusty wash over the neck and shoulders; scales along mid-dorsal region of tail in two rows, each scale similar in width to adjacent scales; western SA, east to the Gawler Ranges; mainly tree-dwelling where it overlaps with *E. striolata* ***E. richardi***
Bight Crevice Skink


E. striolata

E. richardi

- 3a. Mid-dorsal tail scales about twice as wide as adjacent scales


E. striolata

- 3a. Typical arboreal colour pattern


E. richardi (photo: Brian Bush)

- 3b. Typical arboreal colour pattern


E. striolata (Mt Barker)

- 3a. Dark, rock-dwelling colour pattern


E. richardi (Nullarbor coast)

- 3b. Dark, rock-dwelling colour pattern

Key to the South Australian species of *Eremiascincus*

1. a. Well-developed pattern of equally wide dark and light cross-bands on both body and tail ***E. richardsonii***
Broad-banded Sandswimmer
- b. No banding on body or any banding weak and poorly contrasting (Figs. 2a & 2b, below); some Lake Eyre Basin animals completely patternless **2**



E. richardsonii

1a. Well-developed bands on body and tail

2. a. General colour pale sandy-yellow to flesh colour, without banding on dorsum, occasionally fine banding dorsolaterally; pale brown poorly-contrasting transverse tail bands, sometimes absent; usually eight upper labial scales; east of Stuart Highway ***E. phantasmus***
Ghost Skink
- b. General colour golden yellow-brown; without banding on dorsum or with transverse pale brown dorsolateral bands; dark narrow contrasting transverse bands on the tail; usually seven upper labials; west of Stuart Highway ***E. pallidus***
Western Narrow-banded Sandswimmer



E. phantasmus

2a. Sandy-yellow to flesh coloured, with pale, poorly contrasting tail banding



E. pallidus

2b. Golden-brown colour with more distinct bands on tail

Key to the South Australian species of *Eulamprus*

1. a. A narrow pale yellow to golden dorsolateral line running from behind the eye separates the black lateral colouring from the brown back ***E. quoyii***
Eastern Water Skink
- b. No gold dorsolateral line **2**

*E. quoyii***1a.** Pale yellow to gold dorsolateral line*E. heatwolei***1b.** No yellow to gold dorsolateral line

2. a. Strong cream stripe from forearm, under the ear and along the lower jaw; throat and neck with bold black blotches; belly immaculate bright yellow ***E. heatwolei***
Yellow-bellied Water Skink
- b. No strong cream stripe from forearm to jaw; throat and neck pale greyish with weakly contrasting darker smudges; belly variable, usually cream to dull greenish-yellow and often with scattered small black flecks ***E. tympanum***
Southern Water Skink

*E. heatwolei***2a.** Pale lip and neck stripe, outlined by strong black and white throat and neck markings*E. tympanum***2b.** Without pale lip and neck stripe, throat and neck dull greyish or cream with weak darker smudges

Key to the South Australian species of *Hemiergis*

1. a. Five fingers and toes 2
- b. Fewer than five fingers and toes 3
2. a. Third and fourth toes equal in length; dark brown above with black irregular temporal stripe often continuing into a dorsolateral stripe or line of dark markings, and usually a pair of paravertebral lines; belly intense yellow to orange ***H. initialis***
Southern Five-toed Earless Skink
- b. Fourth toe longer than third; plain grey-brown to dull pinkish-orange, with no black dorsal pigment; belly pale yellow ***H. millewae***
Rusty Earless Skink

*H. initialis***2a.** Dark brown with black temporal stripe*H. millewae***2b.** Rusty brown with no dark temporal stripe*H. initialis***2a.** Pair of paravertebral lines and two longest rear toes same length

3. a. Four fingers and toes; head and body up to 75 mm ***H. peronii***
Four-toed Earless Skink
- b. Three fingers and toes; head and body no more than 55 mm. . ***H. decresiensis***
Southern Earless Skink

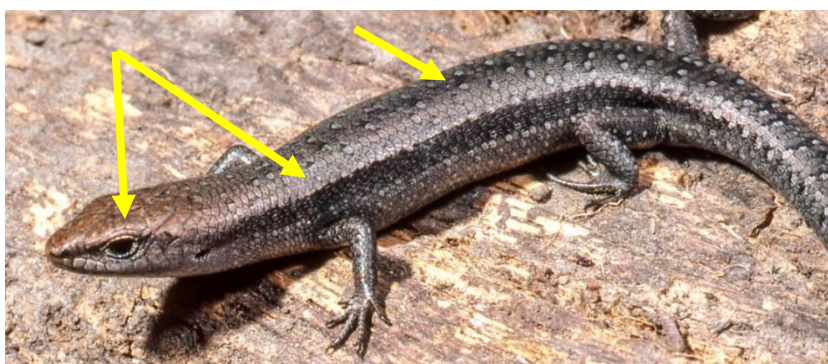
*H. peronii***3a.** Larger size; four toes*H. decresiensis***3b.** Smaller size; three toes

Key to the South Australian species of *Lampropholis*

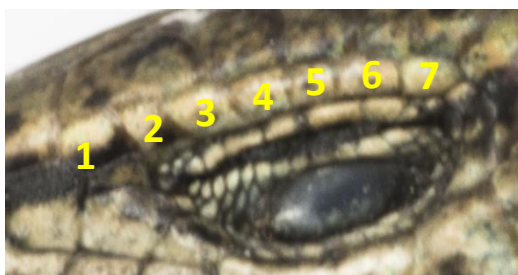
1. a. Top of head and back similarly coloured, uniform brown; no dark vertebral stripe; usually a narrow, golden dorsolateral line; seven supraciliaries ***L. delicata***
Delicate Skink
- b. Top of head and back differently coloured, head coppery brown, back grey; black vertebral stripe present but often weakly contrasting; usually no pale dorsolateral line; usually six supraciliaries (range 5-7) ***L. guichenoti***
Garden Skink

*L. delicata*

- 1a.** Top of head and body same colour; no dark vertebral stripe

*L. guichenoti*

- 1b.** Top of head brownish, body greyish; weak dark vertebral stripe usually present

*L. delicata*

- 1a.** Seven supraciliaries

*L. guichenoti*

- 1b.** Six supraciliaries

Key to the South Australian species of *Lerista*

Note that throughout 'toes' applies only to hind limbs and 'fingers' to forelimbs.

1. a. Five fingers and toes 2
- b. Fewer than five fingers and toes 3
2. a. Strong black lateral stripe always present, but not continuous along original tail, and no additional narrow black lower lateral stripe; three supraoculars *L. bougainvillii*
Southeastern Slider
- b. Strong black lateral stripe, if well developed, extends along original tail, and an additional a narrow black lower lateral stripe also present; beach-dwelling specimens usually almost patternless, with only weak lateral stripe and faint white midlateral stripe; four supraoculars *L. microtis*
Long-legged Slider



L. bougainvillii

- 2a.** Single strong black side stripe not continuous on tail



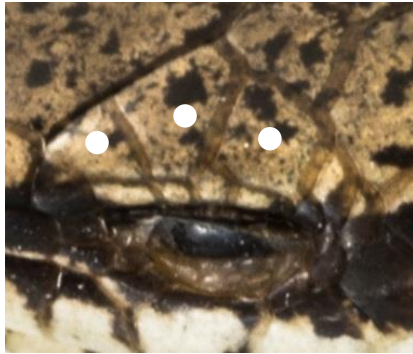
L. microtis

- 2b.** Two strong black side stripes, the larger upper stripe extending along original tail



L. microtis

- 2b.** Beach variant very pale with weak blackish lateral stripe

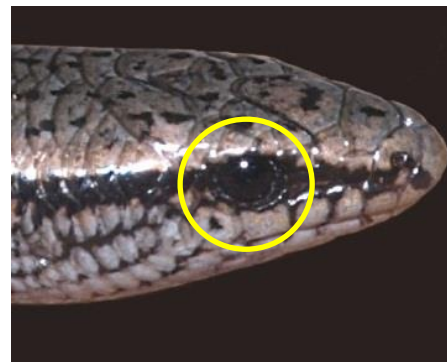
*L. bougainvillii***2a. Three supraoculars**

Note: Supraocular scales begin with the scale posterior to the prefrontal and end with the scale anterior to the parietal scale

*L. microtis***2b. Four supraoculars**

3. a. Four fingers and toes 4
 b. Fewer than four fingers and toes 7

4. a. Eyelids moveable, the lower lid with a transparent disc ***L. dorsalis***
 Southern Four-toed Slider
 b. Eyelids immoveable, the lower eyelid forming a completely transparent spectacle 6

*L. dorsalis***4a. Eyelid movable (note elliptical eye shape)***L. timida***4b. Eyelid immovable, (note circular eye shape)**

5. a. Faint brown lateral line or series of spots from snout to base of tail; body pale sandy beige colour, yellowish tail ***L. aeriiceps***
 Yellow-tailed Slider
 b. Strong black lateral stripe from the base of the tail to the snout 6



L. aericeps

5a. Without strong dark lateral stripe



L. taeniata

5b. Black lateral stripe present

- 6.**
- a.** Back sandy orange; sides with a single black longitudinal upper lateral stripe; five supraciliary scales (small second supraciliary present) ***L. taeniata***
Ribbon Slider
 - b.** Back grey-brown; sides with a broad, black upper lateral stripe and a second faint lower lateral dark line which outline a white midlateral stripe; four supraciliary scales (small second supraciliary absent) ***L. distinguenda***
Southwestern Four-toed Slider



L. taeniata

6a. Sandy orange back; no markings below the black lateral stripe



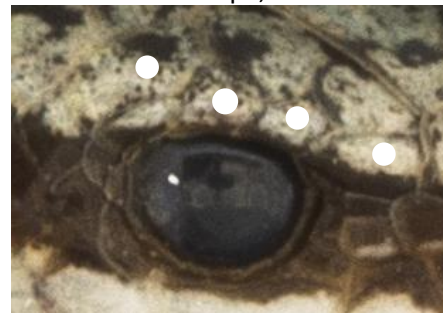
L. distinguenda

6b. Grey-brown back; white stripe below the black lateral stripe, outlined in black



L. taeniata

6a. Five supraciliary scales



L. distinguenda

6b. Four supraciliary scales

- 7.**
- a.** Three fingers. **8**
 - b.** Fewer than three fingers. **11**
- 8.**
- a.** Eyelids immoveable, the lower eyelid forming a completely transparent spectacle; tail, especially underside, dull yellowish . . ***L. timida***
Dwarf Three-toed Slider
 - b.** Eyelids moveable, the lower lid with a transparent disc; tail underside whitish **9**



L. timida

8a. Tail yellowish, especially the underside

- 9. a.** Back a uniform light golden to greyish-brown, contrasting sharply with a broad sharp-edged black upper lateral stripe; no white midlateral stripe
- b.** Back medium to chocolate brown, with a black upper lateral stripe that may be broad or thin, sharp or ragged-edged; with or without a white midlateral stripe

L. elongata

Woomera Slider

10



L. elongata

9a. Uniform light golden back

- 10. a.** Sharply defined black lateral stripe has an equally well-defined white stripe on its lower margin; known only from the Musgrave Ranges
- b.** Upper and lower edges of black lateral stripe tend to merge with background colour; lower sides pale but no distinct white midlateral stripe; southern coast and hinterland, east as far as Adelaide

L. speciosa

Musgrave Slider

L. terdigitata

Southern Three-toed Slider



L. speciosa

10a. Well-defined black and white midlateral stripes

*L. terdigitata*

10b. Black lateral stripe not sharp-edged, no white midlateral stripe

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>11. a. Three toes</p> <p> b. Two toes</p>
<p>12. a. Forelimbs present, very small</p> <p> b. Forelimbs absent.</p>
<p>13. a. No dark lateral line; forelimb with one or two fingers with distinct claw; eastern SA, west to the Flinders Ranges</p> <p> b. Dark upper lateral lines present; tiny forelimb without distinct claw; far west coastal areas, east to the Head of the Bight</p> | <p><i>L. desertorum</i>
Great Desert Slider</p> <p>12</p>
<p>13</p>
<p>14</p>
<p><i>L. punctatovittata</i>
Spotted Slider</p> <p><i>L. baynesi</i>
Speckled Slider</p> |
|---|---|

*L. punctatovittata*

13a. No dark lateral lines

*L. baynesi*

13b. Dark lateral lines

14. a. Belly pale lemon-yellow; large size (up to 100 mm SVL); *L. edwardsae*
frontoparietals paired, interparietal distinct; Myall Slider
- b. Belly translucent whitish; small (less than 60 mm SVL);
frontoparietals and interparietal fused to form a single shield 15


L. edwardsae

14a. Large, yellow-bellied

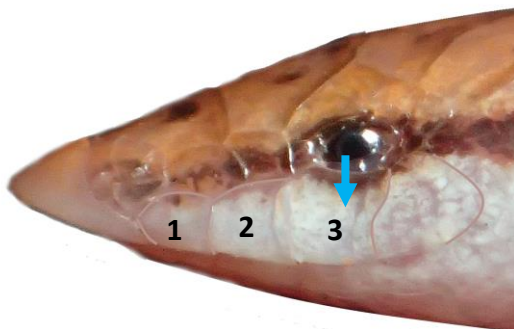

L. edwardsae

14a. Frontoparietals paired,
interparietal distinct

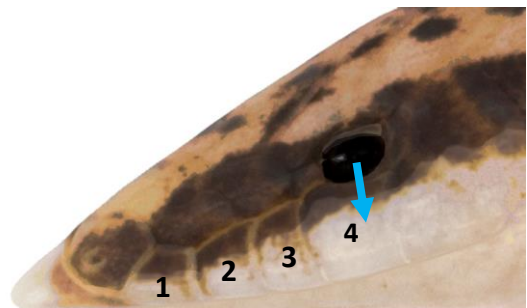
L. bipes

14b. Frontoparietals and interparietal
fused into a single shield

15. a. Third upper labial below the eye; dark facial stripe
sometimes narrow or weak *L. bipes*
Western Two-toed Slider
- b. Fourth upper labial below the eye; dark facial stripe always
well developed and contrasting *L. labialis*
Eastern Two-toed Slider


L. bipes

15a. Third upper labial below the eye


L. labialis

15b. Fourth upper labial below the eye

Key to the South Australian species of *Liopholis*

1. a. Background colour of body pale sandy to bright reddish orange; dorsal and head scales highly polished and glossy . . . 2
- b. Background colour of body earthy grey, fawn or brown; dorsal and head scales smooth and shiny but not highly glossed . . . 4



L. striata

- 1a. Background body colour pale sandy to bright reddish orange (refer also to figs. 3a and 3b)



L. personata

- 1b. Background body colour grey to brown

2. a. Pupil vertically elliptical in bright light ***L. striata***
Night Skink
- b. Pupil round to slightly oval in bright light 3



L. striata

- 2a. Vertically elliptical pupil



L. inornata

- 2b. Round pupil

3. a. Sides, and sometimes the back, with scattered to numerous small dark flecks; belly pearly white in life; small (to 90 mm SVL) ***L. inornata***
Desert Skink
- b. Sides mottled blue-grey or pale orange; no blackish dorsal or lateral flecks; belly lemon yellow in life; large (to 200 mm SVL). ***L. kintorei***
Tjakura

*L. inornata*

3a. Small; dark flecks on sides and sometimes also on back

*L. kintorei*

3b. Very large; pale orange mottled sides without black flecks

The remaining species share similar intra-species colour pattern variations, ranging from patterned with dorsal lines and spots and spotted sides, to completely plain (example: *L. whitii* below). This creates the problem that individuals of different species with the same colour pattern type can look more similar to one another than individuals of the same species that have differing colour pattern variants. Distribution will assist identification but note that some species overlap in a few parts of their range. Confirmation of identity may depend on scale features.

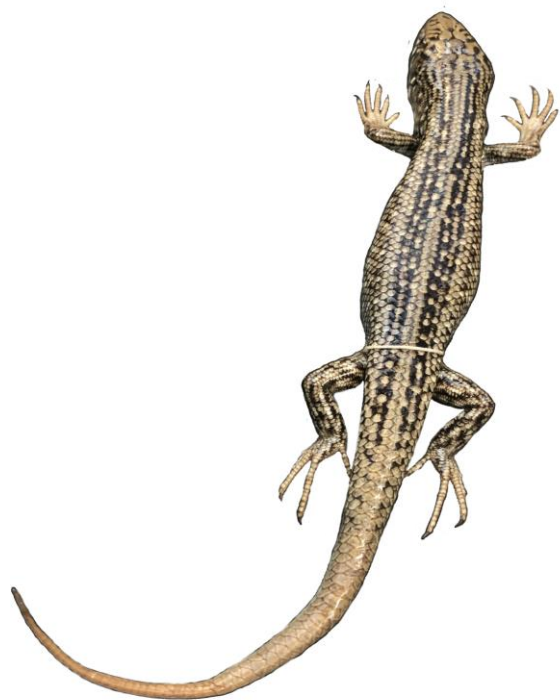


Intra-species pattern variation in *L. whitii*: From strongly patterned with distinct pale spots (left) to patternless (right)

4. a. Pattern includes a black vertebral stripe and broken black dorsal lines; **only known from far north** in the vicinity of Oodnadatta ***L. slateri virgata***
Black-striped Skink
- b. No black vertebral stripe; If strong dorsal pattern, black dorsolateral stripes enclose pale spots **5**



L. slateri virgata (Glenn Shea)



L. multiscutata

- 4a.** Back with a black vertebral stripe and black dashes
- 4b.** Back without black vertebral stripe but a pair of black stripes, each enclosing small pale spots
5. a. Upper and lower lip scales dark-edged or marked with blackish vertical bars; dorsal black stripes (when present) each enclosing a double series of small pale spots; subdigital lamellae under fourth toe with paired keels; interparietal shield in adults is as wide as the frontal ***L. multiscutata***
Bull Skink
- b. Lips plain pale grey or with a dark-edged pale horizontal stripe; dorsal black stripes (when present) each enclosing a single series of small pale spots; subdigital lamellae under fourth toe with a single keel; interparietal shield in adults is markedly narrower than the frontal **6**



Liopholis multiscutata
(Jules Farquhar)

5a. Upper and lower lips with vertical blackish bars



L. whitii

5b. Upper lip with horizontal, dark-edged pale stripe



L. whitii

5b. Upper lip unmarked



L. multiscutata

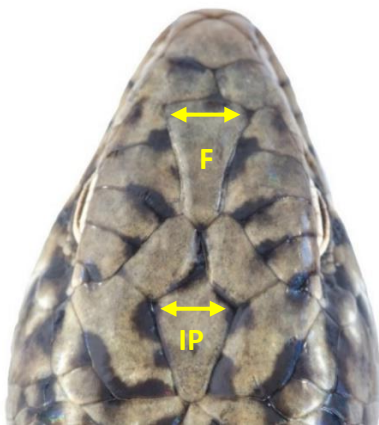
5a. Underside of toe with two keels (ridges) on each scale



L. whitii

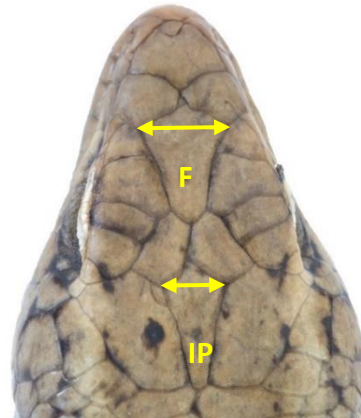
5b. Underside of toe with a single ridge or callus on each scale

(Illustrations: Delma Corazon)



L. multiscutata

5a. Interparietal as wide as frontal

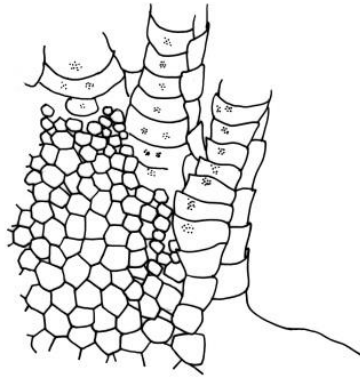
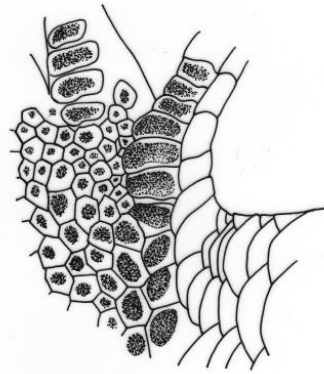


L. personata

5b. Interparietal narrower than frontal

- 6.**
- a.** Temperate southern SA; lateral spots when present are pale yellow blotches, each surrounded by a black outline, on a light grey background; subdigital lamellae keeled and soles of the feet pale
 - b.** Flinders Ranges, and the Mann Ranges of the APY Lands; lateral spots when present are small and whitish on a blackish background; subdigital lamellae and soles of the feet black and rounded

L. whitii
White's Skink

*L. whitii**L. personata*

6a. Soles of feet weakly pigmented, scales flat

6b. Soles of feet blackish, scales rounded

(Illustrations: Delma Corazon)

- 7.**
- a.** Flinders Ranges and adjacent rocky hills; usually a pale dorsal zone that is distinct from the lateral colouring which may be pale-spotted (see Fig. **1b**)
 - b.** Musgrave and Mann Ranges of far northwestern SA; dorsal and lateral colouring similar and plain

L. personata

Flinders Ranges
Rock Skink

L. aputja

Central Ranges
Rock Skink

Key to the South Australian species of *Morethia*

1. a. Body black with bold white dorsolateral and midlateral stripes that run on to the side of the face; tail brilliant red ***M. ruficauda***
Fire-tailed Skink
- b. Body brown to grey; no bold, straight-edged white dorsolateral stripe **2**



M. ruficauda

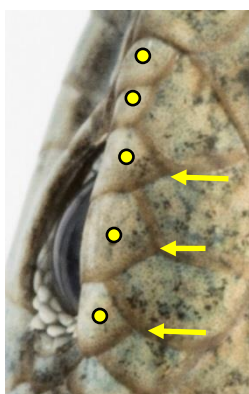
- 1a.** Bold black and white body pattern; bright red tail and hind limbs

The remaining four species of brownish, dark-sided skinks can be difficult to identify. A reliable feature is the number of supraciliaries ("eyebrow" scales) that form an interlocking zig-zag joint with the large supraoculars. Yellow spots indicate supraciliary scales; arrows show those that interlock with supraocular scales.



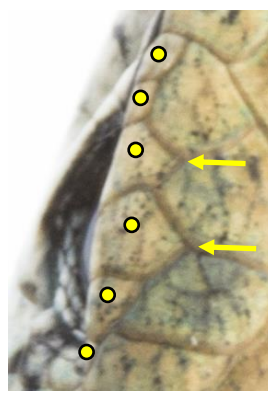
M. butleri

- 2a.** No interlocking supraciliaries



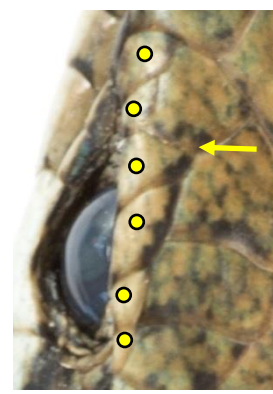
M. adalaidensis

- 3a.** 3 interlocking supraciliaries



M. obscura

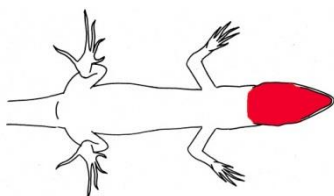
- 4a.** 2 interlocking supraciliaries



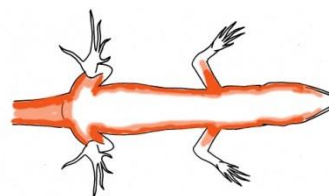
M. boulengeri

- 4b.** 1 interlocking supraciliary

Male breeding colouring can help separate these four species. In three, the throat is red but in *M. adalaidensis* males lack red throat pigment but have red-orange to pink colouring around the edges of the belly and under the legs and tail.



- 2a, 4a, 4b.** Males with red throat



- 3a.** Males with red edging on underside

2. a. Lateral dark stripe fades posterior to the forelimb; the supraciliary row forms a straight-line contact without penetration between the supraoculars (fig. 2a on previous page) ***M. butleri***
Woodland Morethia
- b. Lateral dark stripe or zone of dark spots continues along flanks to the level of the hindlimbs; one or more supraciliaries enlarged to form an interlocking zigzag contact with the supraoculars **3**

*M. butleri***2a.** Lateral dark stripe fades after the forelimb

3. a. Dark double stripe or double row of blotches down the middle of the back; upper lateral and white midlateral stripe ragged-edged, often broken up; the 3rd, 4th and 5th supraciliaries form an interlocking zigzag contact with the supraoculars (fig. 3a on previous page) ***M. adelaidensis***
Saltbush Morethia
- b. No double series of dark dorsal lines or spots; upper lateral dark stripe straight-edged, but may fade posteriorly **4**

*M. adelaidensis***3a.** Double series of dark blotches run down back; lateral markings broken

4. a. Dorsal pattern includes a few to many scales which are blackish with a white central dot; the 3rd and 4th supraciliaries interlock with the supraoculars (fig. 4a on previous page) . . . ***M. obscura***
Shrubland Morethia
- b. Back uniform brown or with black flecks or fine black speckles down the mid-dorsal area; only the 3rd supraciliary interlocks with the supraoculars (fig. 4b on previous page) ***M. boulengeri***
Eastern Morethia



M. obscura

- 4a.** Dorsal pattern with darkish scales containing a pale central dot, although some specimens are much plainer with few dots and no lateral stripes



M. boulengeri

- 4b.** Dorsal pattern uniformly brown or with small black flecks; lateral stripes prominent

Key to the South Australian species of *Pseudemoia*

1. a. Light ragged-edged midlateral stripe irregular, often poorly developed and broken up by dark flecks *P. entrecasteauxii*
Southern Grass Skink
- b. Light midlateral stripe well developed and straight-edged ... 2



P. entrecasteauxii

- 1a.** Speckled midlateral stripe
(red in breeding males)



P. rawlinsoni

- 1b.** Straight-edged midlateral stripe



P. pagenstecheri

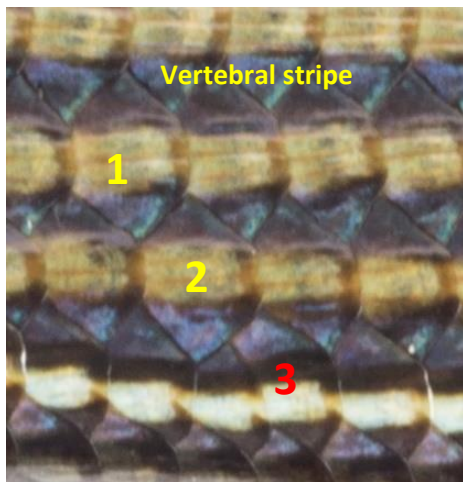
- 1b.** Straight-edged midlateral stripe
(red in breeding males)



P. baudini

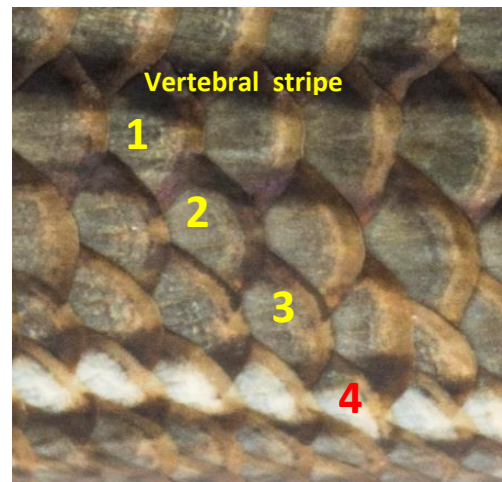
- 1b.** Straight-edged midlateral stripe

2. a. Coast of the Great Australian bight east as far as Lincoln National Park (Fig. 1b) *P. baudini*
Bight Coast Skink
- b. Lower southeast of SA, south of a line from from about Robe to Naracoorte 3
3. a. Light dorsolateral stripe runs along third scale row on each side; midlateral stripe always white *P. rawlinsoni*
Glossy Grass Skink
- b. Light dorsolateral stripe runs along the fourth, or third-plus-fourth, scale row on each side; midlateral stripe orange to red in breeding males *P. pagenstecheri*
Tussock Skink



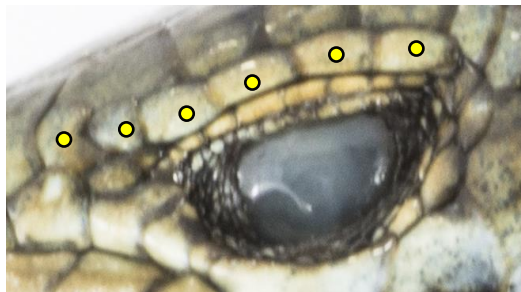
P. rawlinsoni

3a. Light stripe on scale row three



P. pagenstecheri

3b. Light stripe on scale row four



P. rawlinsoni

3a. Six supraciliaries



P. pagenstecheri

3b. Five supraciliaries

Key to the South Australian species of *Tiliqua*

1. a. Dorsal body scales very enlarged, pinecone-like; head shields fragmented into a mosaic of polygonal scales; tail short, flat and blunt-tipped ***T. rugosa***
Sleepy Lizard (Shingleback)
- b. Dorsal body scales small and smooth; head shields not fragmented; tail cylindrical and tapers to a point **2**



T. rugosa with neonates

1a. Readily identifiable scale type & body shape

2. a. Body pattern consists of speckles or blotches (may be completely plain on some *Tiliqua adelaidensis*) **3**
- b. Body pattern consists of light and dark cross-bands **4**



T. adelaidensis

2a. Dark-speckled or plain body pattern



T. nigrolutea

2a. Pale-blotched body pattern



T. scincoides

2b. Distinctly banded body pattern

3.
 - a. Tongue pink; body size small (no more than 110 mm SVL); body plain or lightly to heavily speckled with small, irregular black spots ***T. adalaidensis***
Pygmy Bluetongue
 - b. Tongue blue; body typical bluetongue size (up to about 260 mm SVL); blackish back patterned by series of large grey -brown blotches ***T. nigrolutea***
Blotched Bluetongue



T. adalaidensis

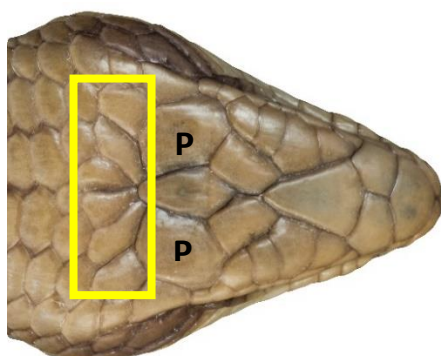
- 3a. Pink tongue; dorsal body pattern without large pale blotches



T. nigrolutea

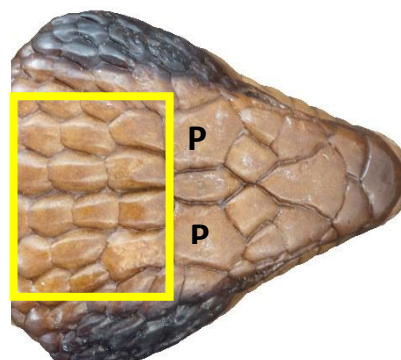
- 3b. Blue tongue; dorsal back pattern of grey-brown pale blotches

4.
 - a. Parietal scales (P) bordered posteriorly by irregularly arranged enlarged nuchal scales ***T. scincoides*** (Fig. 2b)
Eastern Bluetongue
 - b. Parietal scales (P) bordered posteriorly by several series of regularly arranged tile-like scales 5



T. scincoides

- 4a. Irregularly arranged occipital scales



T. occipitalis

- 4b. More regular tile-like occipital scales

5. a. Body yellow to light brown banded in dark brown; three or four strongly contrasting tail bands ***T. occipitalis***
Western Bluetongue
- b. Body pale grey with nine to fourteen orange cross-bands; tail weakly banded or uniform grey ***T. multifasciata***
Centralian Bluetongue



T. occipitalis - Brightly banded colour pattern from sandy terrain



T. occipitalis - Dark colour pattern from hard soil habitats

- 5a. Broadly banded body; tail usually with three dark bands



T. multifasciata

- 5b. Numerous narrow (orange) cross-bands on body; plain tail

Lookup table for slender, elongate skinks with reduced limbs in S.A. (Addendum to Skinks of S.A. Key)

Each of these skinks has small fore and hind limbs that are widely separated. Some have no forelimbs at all. The tail tends to be the same diameter as the body for at least half its length. The body is narrow and elongate.

When checking fingers and toes, note that the outer fingers and toes can be very small – look carefully!

Cross-check identifications in the keys

Fingers	Toes	Colour and Pattern			Tail	Genus and species	Common name	Additional details
		Back	Side	Belly				
5	5	olive (some juveniles with pale spots)	paler version of back	cream to pale yellow with orange speckling	colour same as body	<i>Cyclodomorphus melanops</i>	Spinifex Slender Bluetongue	large – to 20 cm total length
5	5	grey-brown with dark spotting	vertical dark bars on neck	off-white with dark speckling	colour same as body	<i>Cyclodomorphus venustus</i>	Saltbush Slender Bluetongue	large – to 20 cm total length
5	5	dark brown	blackish brown	bright yellow to orange	colour same as body	<i>Hemiergis initialis</i>	Southern Five-toed Earless Skink	
5	5	light tan to orange-brown	light tan to orange-brown	pale yellow	colour same as body	<i>Hemiergis millewae</i>	Rusty Earless Skink	
5	5	light to dark brown, often with a weak pair of dark lines	Single strong black lateral stripe	translucent white sometimes flushed with yellow and with dark speckles	adult undertail bright yellowish to orange; juvenile tail bright red	<i>Lerista bougainvillii</i>	Southeastern Slider	
5	5	medium grey-brown, with a pair of black lines	strong black lateral stripe edged above and below by white, and a second narrower black lower lateral stripe	white	adult undertail pale yellowish; juvenile tail bright red	<i>Lerista microtis</i>	Long-legged Slider	Typical colour form from among rocks and ground debris
5	5	pale sandy beige, unmarked	weak lateral dark stripe	white	adult undertail pale yellowish; juvenile tail bright red	<i>Lerista microtis</i>	Long-legged Slider	Beach-dwelling colour form

4	5	light to dark brown	black lateral stripe edged below by white	off-white; yellow in breeding males	colour same as body	<i>Menetia greyii</i>	Common Dwarf Skink	
4 (or 5)	4 (or 5)	medium to dark brown	blackish brown	bright yellow	colour same as body	<i>Anepischetosia maccoyi</i>	Salamander Skink	4 - 4 is most common toe arrangement for SA specimens
4	4	pale orange-brown to very dark brown, with a pair of narrow to prominent black stripes	plain or with variably developed ragged black dorsolateral stripe	bright yellow	same as body; tail often with dark spots on the yellow background colour	<i>Hemiergis peronii</i>	Four-toed Earless Skink	
4	4	pale sandy beige, unmarked	pale sandy beige, unmarked	translucent white	undertail bright yellow or orange-yellow	<i>Lerista aericeps</i>	Yellow-tailed Slider	
4	4	light brown	strong black lateral stripe, edged below with a white stripe	translucent white	adult undertail orange-yellow; juvenile red	<i>Lerista distinguenda</i>	Southwestern Four-toed Slider	Eye with a spectacle instead of moveable eyelids
4	4	light brown, with narrow dark dorsal lines	strong black lateral stripe, edged below with a white stripe	translucent white	adult undertail yellowish to orange; juvenile tail red	<i>Lerista dorsalis</i>	Southern Four-toed Slider	Eye with moveable eyelids
4	4	bright sandy-tan	narrow black lateral stripe - no white edging	translucent whitish	adult, same as body; juvenile probably red	<i>Lerista taeniata</i>	Ribbon Slider	
3 or 4	3 or 4	medium to dark brown	blackish brown	bright yellow	colour same as body	<i>Anepischetosia maccoyi</i>	Salamander Skink	3-3 and 4-3 individuals known from Canunda NP
3	3	mid- to dark brown	blackish brown	bright yellow	colour same as body	<i>Hemiergis decresiensis</i>	Three-toed Earless Skink	
3	3	pale golden brown	strong black lateral stripe	white, most scales with a dark dot	colour same as body	<i>Lerista elongata</i>	Woomera Slider	Confined to the western half of the Lake Eyre basin
3	3	mid- to dark brown, unmarked, or with a pair of black dorsal lines	strong black lateral stripe, edged below with a white stripe	white, most scales with a dark dot	colour same as body	<i>Lerista speciosa</i>	Musgrave Slider	Confined to the Musgrave Ranges of the far NW of SA

3	3	mid- to dark brown, often with a weak pair of dark lines	black lateral stripe, lower edge merges with underside colouring	white, most scales with a dark dot	colour same as body	<i>Lerista terdigitata</i>	Southern Three-toed Slider	
3	3	pale golden brown to to dark brown	thin dark lateral stripe	translucent whitish	adult undertail orange-yellow; juvenile red	<i>Lerista timida</i>	Dwarf Three-toed Slider	
2	3	pale grey-brown, with a pair of narrow dorsal lines	strong black lateral stripe	pale yellow	adult colour same as body; juvenile red	<i>Lerista desertorum</i>	Great Desert Slider	
1 (or 2)	2	pale pinkish brown, most scales with a dark spot , especially towards the sides and rear of the body	paler version of back	translucent whitish	colour same as body	<i>Lerista punctatovittata</i>	Spotted Slider	2-fingered individuals are rare
1	2	pale grey-brown, with a faint pair of narrow dorsal lines	weak lateral dark stripe	translucent whitish	colour same as body	<i>Lerista baynesi</i>	Speckled Slider	SA populations confined to far SW corner, adjacent to the Bight coast and the WA border
0	2	pale grey-brown, with a pair of strong dark dorsal lines	strong black lateral stripe	pale yellow	colour same as body	<i>Lerista edwardsae</i>	Myall Slider	Adults much larger than the next two species and with paired frontoparietal scales
0	2	sandy pale brown with a pair of thin dark dorsal lines	strong black lateral stripe	translucent whitish	colour same as body	<i>Lerista bipes</i>	Western Two-toed Slider	3rd upper lip scale is below the eye
0	2	sandy yellow-orange with a pair of thin dark dorsal lines	strong black lateral stripe	translucent whitish	colour same as body	<i>Lerista labialis</i>	Eastern Two-toed Slider	4th upper lip scale is below the eye