



REPTILE

Eulamprus heatwolei

Yellow-bellied Water Skink

| AUS | SA | AMLR | Endemism | Residency |
|-----|----|------|----------|-----------|
| - | V | V | - | Resident |



Photo: © Peter Canty

Conservation Significance

In SA, the majority of the distribution is confined within the AMLR, disjunct from the remaining extant distribution in other States. Within the AMLR the species' relative area of occupancy is classified as 'Extremely Restricted'.³

Description

Olive-brown skink with darker flecks. Flanks are dark with lighter spots. Pale stripe from behind the mouth to front of the ear opening. Narrow pale golden or yellowish stripe along sides from above eye to middle of back. Usually has pronounced dark lines under the chin. Snout-vent length up to 90 mm.²

Distribution and Population

Predominantly an east coast of Australia species which has an isolated population in the AMLR. The major occurrence of this species extends from extreme eastern VIC along the Great Dividing Range to northern NSW. In the northern part of its range, occurs only at higher elevations but in the south occurs at low elevations. Also occurs on islands off NSW.⁴

In thinned forests (eastern Australia) the species has been estimated at mean densities of 77 individuals per hectare and in grazed woodland at 200 per hectare (Kutt 1993; Webb 1991).⁴

With the exception of records from Wellington on the River Murray, all South Australian occurrences are from watercourses and permanent swamps of

Fleurieu Peninsula to the south of the Onkaparinga River.¹

Post-1983 AMLR filtered records are limited and restricted to the southern Fleurieu, between Strathalbyn and Deep Creek.³

Pre-1983 AMLR filtered records indicate a similar distribution, with records from near Mount Compass to Deep Creek, Angas River, Strathalbyn and Currency Creek (M. Hutchinson *pers. comm.*).³

Habitat

Occurs in woodland, sclerophyll forest, open forest and tall open forest (Webb 1991, Kutt 1993).⁴ Usually found in close association with wet microhabitats such as the margins of swamps, lagoons and creeks.² A frequent feature of habitats are rotting logs (Brown and Nelson 1993; Langkilde et al. 2003). May occur on logs up to 1.5 m above the ground (Brown and Nelson 1993). Habitat is also characterised by large, open sunny patches (Brown and Nelson 1993).⁴

Within the AMLR the preferred broad vegetation groups are Wetland and Riparian.³

Biology and Ecology

Ground-dwelling species which feeds on a variety of invertebrates, small vertebrates and fruits (Webb 1995a).⁴ Females give birth to up to eight young in a litter.²

Inactive over winter but emerges in early spring (late September) (Head et al. 2002).⁴ Diurnal in its activity on the surface (Kutt 1993).⁴ Usually basks on slightly elevated perches such as logs (Kutt 1993).⁴

Aboriginal Significance

Post-1983 records indicate the majority of the AMLR distribution occurs in Ngarrindjeri Nation, bordering Kurna and Peramangk Nations.³

Threats

The Vulnerable status in SA for this species reflects its isolation and limited distribution, and the loss or reduction of its preferred habitat, the southern Fleurieu swamps.¹

May be susceptible to habitat fragmentation, through fire frequency changes and habitat modification (e.g. past timber-cutting practices), although it is considered to be an adaptable species, with its main

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Prepared as part of the Regional Recovery Plan for Threatened Species and Ecological Communities of Adelaide and the Mount Lofty Ranges, South Australia 2009 - 2014





ADELAIDE AND MOUNT LOFTY RANGES SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Threatened Species Profile

Department
for Environment
and Heritage

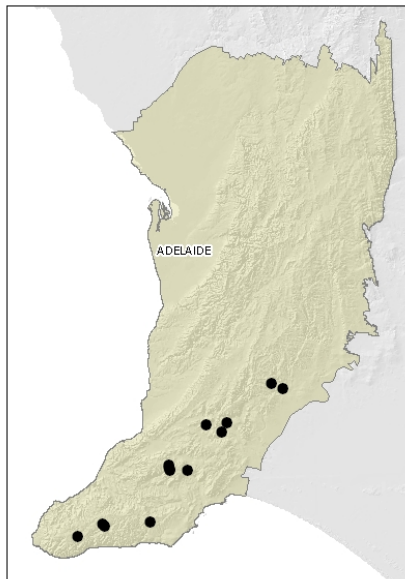
requirement being the presence of permanent water (M. Hutchinson *pers. comm.*).¹

A study in NSW found it was largely unaffected by low-intensity prescribed burns.⁵

Additional current direct threats have been identified and rated for this species. Refer to the main plan accompanying these profiles.

⁵ Penn, A. M., Sherwin, W. B., Lunney, D. and Banks, P. B. (2003). The effects of a low-intensity fire on small mammals and lizards in a logged, burnt forest. *Wildlife Research* 30 (5): 477-486.

Regional Distribution



Map based on filtered post-1983 records.³ Note, this map does not necessarily represent the actual species' distribution within the AMLR.

References

Note: In some cases original reference sources are not included in this list, however they can be obtained from the reference from which the information has been sourced (the reference cited in superscript).

¹ Armstrong, D. M., Croft, S. N. and Foulkes, J. N. (2003). *A Biological Survey of the Southern Mount Lofty Ranges, South Australia, 2000-2001*. Department for Environment and Heritage, South Australia.

² Cogger, H. G. (2000). *Reptiles and Amphibians of Australia (Sixth Edition)*. Reed New Holland.

³ Department for Environment and Heritage (2007). *Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Regional Recovery Pilot Project Database*. Unpublished data extracted and edited from BDBSA, SA Herbarium (July 2007) and other sources.

⁴ Greer, A. E. (2006). *Encyclopedia of Australian Reptiles*. Australian Museum Online, Version date: 7 August 2006. Available from <http://www.amonline.net.au/herpetology/research/#encyclopedia>.

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