

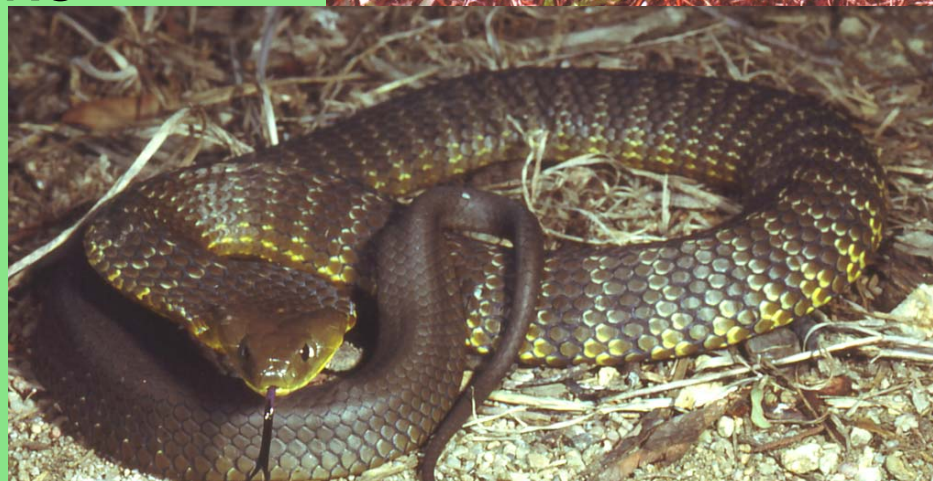
# Snakes of the Southern Tablelands

Photo of copperhead by Geoff Robertson



# Snakes of the Southern Tablelands

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



# Front fanged or 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  
(*Demansia psammophis*) (100cm). No photo.





**Eastern or common brown snake** (*Pseudonaja textilis*).

Maximum size 2.3m, average adult size 1.3m.

Photo taken near Nimmitabel by Margaret Ning



**Eastern brown snakes 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*)

In this region, colour can vary but the bright yellow belly is usual

Photo taken near Nimmitabel by Margaret Ning.



**Tiger snake** (*Notechis scutatus*) now out in the open.

Maximum size 2.3m, average adult size 1.3m.

Photo taken at Rose Lagoon by John Wombey





**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. Photos by Geoff Robertson



**Darker form of highlands copperhead** (*Austrelaps ramsayi*).

Maximum size 110cm, average adult size 80cm.

Photo taken at Lake Eucumbene by John Wombey



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

Maximum size 100cm, average adult size 50cm.

Photo by John Wombey



Common death adder  
like other snakes  
species, can vary in  
colour.

Top photo: Ric Longmore's death  
adder taken by Geoff Robertson



# 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 and Little Whip-snake (50 and 40cm)
  - White-lipped and 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*) Photo by John Wombey

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 taken at Coppin's  
Crossing by Ric Longmore



**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.

Prepared by

**Geoff**

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assisted by

**John Wombey**

for the

**Southern**

**Tablelands**

**Ecosystems**

**Park (STEP)**

and

**the ACT**

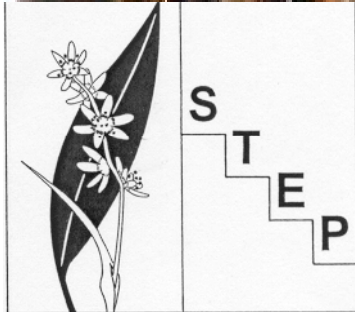
**Herpetological**

**Association**



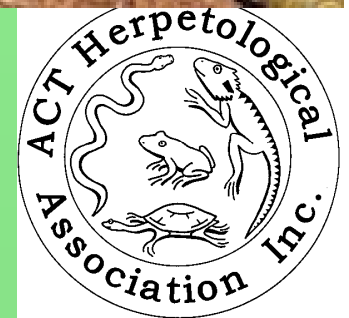
Photos provided by:

- Tara Goodsell
- Ric Longmore
- Margaret Ning
- Geoff Robertson
- John Wombey



# 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**  
Grows to 28cm
- **Plain legless lizard**  
Grows to 47cm
- **Burton's legless lizard**    Grows to 62cm
- **Southern scaly-foot**  
Grows to 86cm







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

Photo by Ross Bennett



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

Photo by Ross Bennett

Next slide shows lighter colour form.



**Striped legless lizard.** Lighter colour form with stripes less obvious.

Photo by 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.



## 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** assisted by **John Wombey**  
for the  
**Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park (STEP)**  
and  
**the ACT Herpetological Association (ACTHA)**



Photos provided by: Ross Bennett, Tara Goodsell,  
Geoff Robertson and John Wombey