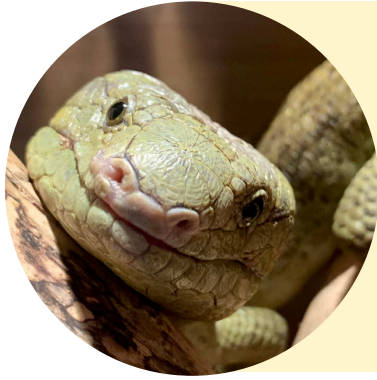




Prehensile-Tailed Skink

Corucia zaborata



Harley

I was born on December 1st, 2015. I came to the Racine Zoo in 2016.

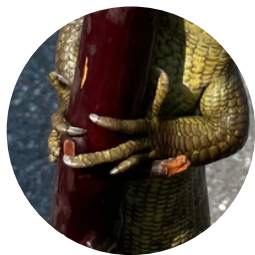
My home is in the Discovery Center, but you may occasionally meet me during an education program as I am one of the zoo's ambassador animals! You can often find me blending in with the vines and leaves in my habitat or basking under my heat lamp.

SKINKS AT A GLANCE



- Commonly referred to as "monkey-tailed skinks" these reptiles use their long, prehensile tail to aid in grasping branches to maintain balance as they move through the tree canopy

32 inches (81 cm) in length
500-850 grams



- Hooked claws on their long toes help stabilize their bodies as they climb up and down branches



- Patterns of olive green, brown, and black scales mix together to camouflage their bodies and protect them from predators
- At the zoo, our skink loves to eat a variety of mixed produce
- In the wild, prehensile-tailed skinks will eat leaves, flowers, fruit, and the growing shoots of a variety of plants

Avg. life expectancy in native habitats: over 20 years
Avg. life expectancy in human care: 20-30 years.

WHERE ARE NATIVE SKINK HABITATS LOCATED?



Prehensile-tailed skinks, also known as Solomon Island Skinks, are native to the Solomon Islands archipelago, a group of islands in the south-west Pacific Ocean off Australia. This species is arboreal, meaning they spend their a large portion of their lives inhabiting the upper canopies of the forests.

Skink Behaviors

SLEEPING

Skinks are crepuscular, meaning they are most active during the hours of dawn and dusk. During the day, they will likely be found sleeping in comfortable hiding spots.

During the day, I like to sleep under my nice, warm heat lamp.



SHEDDING

Most skinks will shed every 4-6 weeks. Their skin will become opaque as an indicator that they are ready to shed.

This process can be stressful for me! If I'm shedding, please be quiet and respectful of my space.



HISSING

I am feeling defensive and protective of my territory. This is just one of the many ways skinks defend themselves in the wild.

I may hiss if I am feeling nervous or uncomfortable.



CLIMBING

Skinks use their long prehensile tails to grasp onto branches in the forest canopies. Their tails will wrap around objects to balance themselves when climbing.

I like to climb around my habitat to explore the fun enrichment my keepers give me!



- Skinks live in communal groups called a circulus. Once young skinks reach a certain age - around 1 year - they leave the circulus to form their own.
- Skinks are known to be very protective of their territory, to scare off predators, will make a sharp hissing sound and may deliver a strong bite if necessary.
- Female prehensile-tailed skinks are very protective of their young, which is unusual in reptiles. Prehensile-tailed skinks are ovoviviparous, which means the eggs hatch inside the mother.
- As a crepuscular animal, they are most active at dawn and dusk, feeding primarily at dusk.

Prehensile Tailed Skink Conservation

Destruction of their habitat through lumber and agriculture and depletion by the pet trade have greatly reduced this animal's chances for survival.

Skinks are currently listed as **near threatened** due to a number of human-wildlife conflict issues. These animals suffer greatly from habitat loss, climate change, and overhunting.



Near Threatened (IUCN 3.1)^[1]

CITES Appendix II (CITES)^[2]

How can we help?

We can buy household paper products made with recycled paper. Purchasing products certified by programs like the Rainforest Alliance or Forest Stewardship Council help to promote sustainable forestry and farming practices.

If considering these animals as a pet, doing ample amounts of research on care requirements and purchasing from reputable breeders can prevent the wild capture of this species!