



New Zealand Herpetological Society Fundraising for Robust Skink Captive Breeding Program

Robust skinks (*Oligosoma alani*) are New Zealand's largest skink, once common across the North Island, but now only found on a handful of small islands.

They cannot survive in the presence of any introduced mammalian predators.

In order to safeguard the species for future generations; new populations should be established on other islands and in pest free areas where they will be safe from predators.

The New Zealand Herpetological Society (NZHS) members and Zoos hold a number of these skinks in captivity. In a partnership, the NZHS and Department of Conservation (DOC) have written a captive management plan for these animals, so that they can be bred in captivity for release into new safe areas.

The first step for the robust skink captive programme is understanding what island(s) individuals originated from, and assessing their suitability for a breeding program. Once the NZHS has this information, we can pair breeding animals and begin the programme.

- The NZHS are seeking an equal financial contribution from donors to enable the project to progress.
- The NZHS wants to support Robust Skink conservation through establishing new populations in safe sites.
- The NZHS will lead the captive programme by contributing skills, husbandry and facilities.
- The NZHS will work in partnership with Iwi, DOC, and island managers to establish new, secure populations in the wild.
- Currently we are looking to raise **\$10,000 - \$15,000** for DNA testing to understand the origin of the captive Robust Skinks and to assess their suitability for a breeding program.
- We intend to seek further funding in the future to support later stages in the project including such activities as; collection of additional animals if necessary, and eventual releases.



If you or your company are interested in donating or want to hear more about the project please follow the link at the bottom of the page or contact the NZHS Committee using the details provided below:

Email: nzhs@reptiles.org.nz

Phone: 027 335 9565

<https://www.reptiles.org.nz/conservation/robust-skink-breeding-programme>