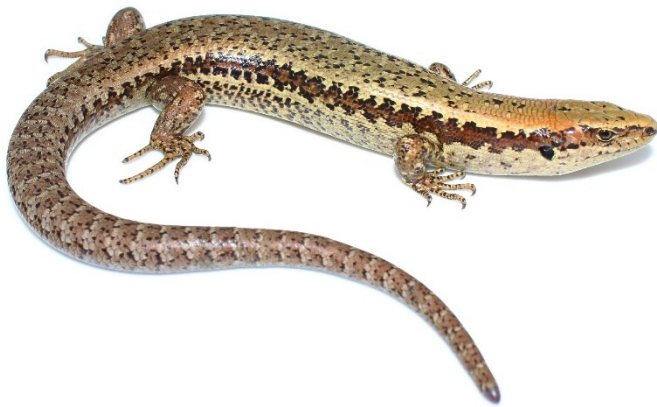


Care Sheet:

Speckled and Spotted skinks



Speckled skink (*Oligosoma newmani*)

Adult Size: up to 114mm SVL.

Threat status: 'At Risk – Recovering'.

Lifespan: Unknown.

Habitat: coastal forest, grassland, flaxland, rock piles with or without accumulated leaf-litter, seabird burrows and under rocks / logs.

Permit Level: Insurance population species.



Spotted skink (*Oligosoma kokowi*)

Adult Size: up to 95mm SVL.

Threat status: 'At Risk – Recovering'.

Lifespan: Unknown.

Habitat: coastal forest, grassland, flaxland, rock piles with or without accumulated leaf-litter, seabird burrows and under rocks / logs..

Permit Level: Insurance population species.

Enclosure:

Minimum recommended enclosure size = 150x70x70cm (LxWxH).

Ideal Group Size:

1:1 (M:F).

Compatible Species:

As some of the larger species of lizards, Stephen's Island speckled skinks and larger spotted skinks may be kept with Duvaucel's geckos, but there are associated risks and it's recommended these species be kept in their own dedicated set-up.

Recommended Cage Furnishing:

The enclosure should be decorated with live plants (though these are not entirely necessary), logs, low branches for climbing, and plenty of ground cover for these skinks to take refuge under. These skinks typically live in coastal-habitat which is either densely vegetated, or consists of rock piles and coarse woody debris (fallen branches, logs, wood-piles) on forest edges. Suitable refuge sites that have proved popular in captivity include rock piles, sections of bamboo or polythene pipe (with one end blocked up), stacks or bark, hollow ponga logs, and stacks of Onduline or timber with spacers between (just wide enough for a lizard to squeeze in). For speckled skinks in particular, it is important that the refuge sites offer thermal stability as this species may be susceptible to heat stress. If Onduline is used it is advisable to cover the top in leaf litter or a piece of wood to insulate it from the sun to prevent any lizards using the sites from overheating.

Breeding:

Both species can be relatively intolerant of conspecifics in captive situations. Because of this it is advisable that these species only be held in pairs and individuals to be paired up are size-matched as closely as possible to minimise the risk of serious injury / death of a smaller individual where there are aggressive encounters. These skinks will reach maturity in 2-4 years and females will breed annually, producing litters of up to five in summer.

Diet:

The diet of these species includes a large portion of invertebrates such as crickets, beetles, moths, and spiders. Being larger species of skinks it's possible that smaller species of lizards comprise a portion of their diet in the wild. As such, in captivity their diet may be supplemented with such items as egg, fish or mince, though these should only be used sparingly as overfeeding with these food items can cause obesity and other more serious health issues. Both species have been recorded eating the berries of native plants in the wild. In captivity they should be provided with native fruits such as *Coprosma* spp., *Melicytus* spp., Kawakawa (*Piper excelsum*), or a mix of watered-down fruit puree with the addition of calcium and reptile vitamins (commercial fruit puree is high in calories so skinks should not be overfed on this, in order to avoid obesity).

Notes:

- Captive *O. newmani* are primarily the large form endemic to Stephen's Island (Takapourewa) in the Marlborough sounds.
- Captive *O. kokowai* were historically collected from the Hawkes Bay region.
- Both species are difficult to breed and fairly rare in captivity. It is recommended that only those keepers with experience keeping skinks obtain this species.