

## How to photograph NZ Lizards for Individual ID's

Taking good identification photographs of the animals is an essential aspect of record keeping that allows you to match your records to the individual and to a degree track any changes in the animal and its condition over time.

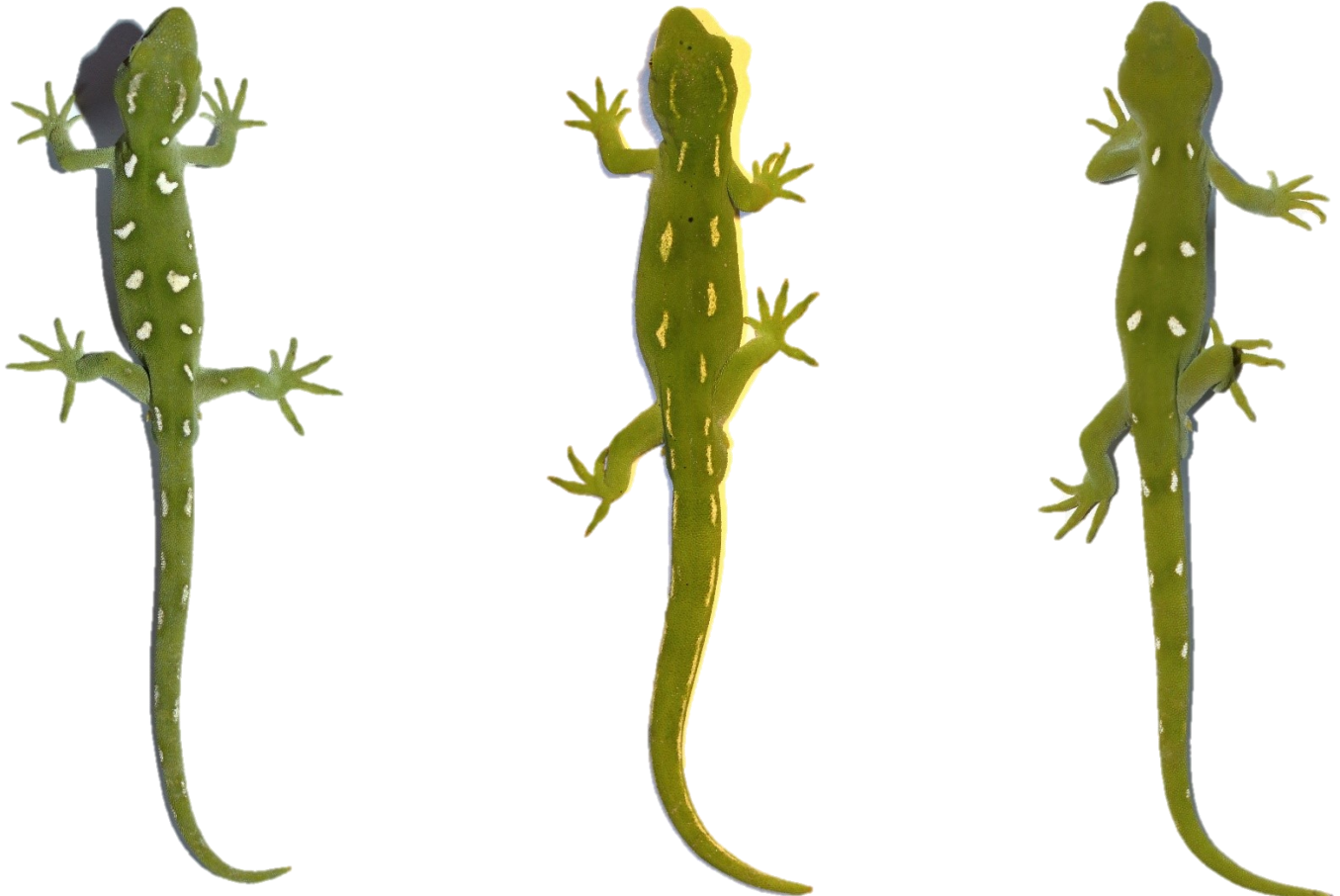
The aim of ID photos is to capture all unique physical aspects of the animal concerned. This includes aspects such as dorsal and lateral patterning as well as any unusual marking or trauma that the animal may have gained throughout its life.

Take particular note of any:

- Unique aspects of pattern.
- Scars.
- Missing toes or potentially missing limbs.
- Unusual marks such as dark spots that are distinct from the animals normal patterning.

### Geckos:

For geckos the best identification feature is the dorsal pattern. At a minimum you should aim to get at least one good photo of the animal's dorsal pattern from directly above. It is also useful to get photos of the animal's lateral (side) patterning, from the left and right flanks. Getting additional photos from these aspects will help you to identify more unique feature which distinguish this animal from similar animals you keep, and those of other registered holders / keepers of the same species.



### Skinks:

For skinks, the best identification features are often the lateral markings / patterning on the flanks, though this may vary for different species, some of which may have more distinct patterning on the dorsum (back). At a minimum you should aim to get at least two good photos, one of each of the left and right flank of the animal. As stated above it is recommended that you get additional photo/s of the animal's dorsal pattern as this may help you to identify more unique features.



### Taking the photos.

The best way to get identification photos of your animals is on a plain background or grid paper to make easy comparison between photos of different animals. For this background you could use a piece of white paper, a piece of graph paper, or a reflective white tray.

It is useful to have a second person acting as 'catcher / handler' for any animals that may try to run away when the photos are taken (this is particularly useful / necessary for fast moving species for example Goldstripe Geckos, Pacific Geckos, and most species of skinks).

The following image shows an ID photo being taken of a Duvaucel's Gecko (*Hoplodactylus duvaucelii*) on a white tray.

