

Otagense Skink



COMMON NAME: **OTAGENSE SKINK**

LATIN NAME: *Oligosoma otagense*

CLASS: Reptilia

ORDER: Sauria

FAMILY: Scincidae

GENUS: *Leiolopisma*

SPECIES/SUB SPECIES: *Otagense*

DESCRIPTION:

A heavy-bodied skink with an overall length of slightly over 30 cms weighing up to 45.7 grams. Gravid females can weigh up to 52 grams. Colouring is black on the upper surface with bold, greenish/gold blotches on the back, sides, limbs and tail. The under surfaces are light grey or yellowish with black mottling.

HABITAT / DISTRIBUTION:

Central Otago areas around the Macraes Flat and Middlemarch districts, east of the Rock and Pillar Range. Otago skinks inhabit areas with schist tors, outcrops and bluffs.

BREEDING:

Mating occurs in April and the young are born in January–February. Twins are normally born, although there has been a report of a triplet birth.

SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR:

Otago skinks are diurnal and strongly saxicolous (dwelling amid rocks). They are active throughout the year, although activity and feeding slows down during the winter months. They do not appear to hibernate.

DIET:

Invertebrates which may include beetles, moths, cicadas, bees, weta, ants, grasshoppers, wasps, larvae, spiders, flies and dragonflies, plus soft fruit and vegetation.

PRINCIPAL THREATS:

- Introduced mammalian predators (eg. rats, mustelids, cats and Little Owls)
- Loss and degradation of habitat.

CONSERVATION STATUS:

DoC Status: Nationally critical (2004)

IUCN Status: Critically endangered.



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