

The Brown Four-Fingered Skink

A look at the brown four-fingered skink.

By Mark O'Shea

Distribution: Eastern Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

Habitat: Most habitats.

Diet: Small arthropods.

Max.length: 50mm SVL (125mm TL).

Reproductive strategy: Oviparous with clutches of 2 eggs.

The brown four-fingered skink is one of the commonest lizards encountered in new Guinea and is relatively common in all habitats on Karkar Island. The presence of four fingers, on the forefeet, is a derived characteristic demonstrating that *Carlia* is an advanced genus. Reduction and loss of digits and limbs is considered an evolutionary advancement within all lizard groups so four fingers is more advanced than five in skinks. This is a highly active diurnal skink which is also quite variable in pattern. Eventually it may be determined that more than one species is represented in the taxa.

Sources for more information:

McCoy M. 1980 Reptiles of the Solomon Islands. Wau Ecology Handbook No.7. vi+80.

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