

Yellow Spotted Lizard Facts



Description

As their name indicates, these reptiles have black or dark brown backs spotted with yellow. Their bellies also are yellow, usually with brown patches. As adults, they measure between 2 1/2 and 5 inches long.

Habitat

Yellow-spotted night lizards live in the subtropical and tropical rain forests of Central America. They're found along both the Atlantic and the Pacific coasts and at elevations up to 2,265 feet. Temperatures in their home ranges average between 71 and 86 degrees Fahrenheit, and humidity usually remains from 70 to 85 percent.

Microhabitat

Yellow-spotted night lizards are a microhabitat specialist, which means they remain in or near the same spot throughout their lives. They're often found in decaying logs or under leaf litter on the forest floor, but some also live beneath rocks or in crevices. Their flat heads and bodies help them squeeze into narrow cracks.

Food

Ants, centipedes, flies, scorpions and spiders make up most of the lizards' diet. While they often find prey without leaving their microhabitat, yellow-spotted night lizards can emerge to hunt, if necessary.

Reproduction

Because these lizards remain in their microhabitats, populations tend to be isolated. Fortunately, they don't have to venture out to find mates; most yellow-spotted night lizards are females who reproduce through parthenogenesis -- their eggs develop without being fertilized. Some populations include males, and in those cases, the lizards reproduce sexually. In either case, the young are born alive rather than hatched from eggs.

Characteristics and traits

The yellow-spotted lizard can grow [up to 5 inches](#). Their body colour can be brown to dark black, and their name comes from yellow spots that appear along the top and sides of their body. Their bodies are scaly, with the tail scales forming a whorl pattern, creating alternative bands of yellow and black/brown/grey on the tail.

As their name suggests, the yellow-spotted night lizard is part of a family of lizards that is believed to be nocturnal, or at least crepuscular. Crepuscular means they are active at dusk.

Normal habitat

The lizard lives in the wild in tropical areas, from central Mexico through the south of Central America to Panama. This lizard is secretive and seems to like to hide in damp areas, under leaves, and in rotting logs. Reference.com says these hard-to-spot lizards like what is known as microhabitats, meaning they may stay in one very small area for their entire life.

Feeding habits

These lizards eat mostly insects: Anything that can fit in his mouth and gets close enough is fair game. This could be ants, centipedes, flies, scorpions, or spiders. He will hunt when he needs to hunt, but primarily he waits for prey to come near.