

Striped-tailed delma



Striped-tailed delma habitat © Eric Vanderduys

Description

The striped-tailed delma is reddish brown or grey brown above and cream on the underside. The colouring upon its head tends to be yellowish and then greyer along the tail region.

It has a very distinctive pattern of alternating cream and yellow vertical bars on the lips and side of the head and a narrow dark stripe along each side of its tail.

Striped-tailed delmas have long snouts and tails that are around four times the length of the body. It reaches approximately 40 centimetres in length. The mid-body scales are in 16 rows.

Distribution

The striped-tailed delma occurs exclusively in Queensland, with a significant proportion confined to the Brigalow Belt bioregion. It occurs along the central Queensland coast south to Keswick Island off Mackay. It has also been recorded in the far northern Brigalow Belt from Magnetic Island and a few localities on the mainland near Townsville, to the foothills below Paluma. There is a single record from higher altitude, near Paluma itself.

Habitat

On the mainland striped-tailed delmas prefers low open coastal forest with grassy understorey. They have also been found in wet sclerophyll forest on islands and open woodland in coastal regions.

Ecology and Life Cycle

The striped-tailed delma is diurnal, which means that it is active during the day. It is extremely shy and is usually only seen briefly. The striped-tailed delma has been known to use leaf litter, logs and sheets of iron as shelter. It feeds upon a variety of arthropods and usually lays two eggs per clutch.



Scientific Name:

Delma labialis

Conservation Status

Vulnerable - IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (International)

Vulnerable - *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (National)

Vulnerable - *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (Queensland)

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Key Threats

Inappropriate fire regimes: Fire frequency, intensity, season, type and extent of fires over time, influence biodiversity and ecosystem processes. Inappropriate fire regimes can potentially alter ecosystem structure and impact on the species habitat requirements i.e. by removing food sources and shelter.

Removal of wood debris and rocks: This species is threatened by the removal of its microhabitat, which includes partly buried rocks, fallen logs and leaf litter.

How to help

- Avoid removing fallen logs, leaf litter and rocks in striped-tailed delma habitat as this minimises vital refuge sites.
- Become involved in community-based on-ground projects (e.g. fencing remnants to reduce grazing impacts, reptile monitoring and field surveys).
- Maintain large, healthy, connected patches of native vegetation.
- If burning, use cool burns in a mosaic pattern that promote patchiness and leave areas of ground cover unburnt.
- Report sightings to WWF-Australia, the Queensland Museum or the EPA/QPWS. Taking a photo of live or dead specimens is useful to help identification.
- Consider entering into a conservation agreement (e.g. Land for Wildlife, Nature Refuges or incentive agreements through grant programs) for conservation and land management assistance.

To find out more about saving threatened species check out www.wwf.org.au/tsn or contact the Threatened Species Network tsn@wwf.org.au.



The Threatened Species Network is a community-based program of the Australian Government and WWF-Australia.



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