



FIVE-LINED SKINK

Species at Risk

In Canada, the Five-lined skink (*Eumeces fasciatus*) is a species at risk and is divided into two separate populations. One population is found in the Carolinian zone along the Lake Erie and Lake Huron shoreline; this population is endangered and is at risk of becoming extirpated from this area. The second population is found throughout the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence area and is classified as special concern.

The Five-lined skink is the only lizard found in Eastern Canada. Adult skinks grow up to 8.5 cm in length and have five white to cream coloured stripes running down the length of their back. Juvenile male and female skinks have an unmistakable bright blue tail that fades with age. During the breeding season adult male skinks develop an orange chin and jaw. Five-lined skinks eat earthworms and insects such as crickets and caterpillars.

The Carolinian population inhabits areas with sandy soil and woody debris such as beaches and dunes along or within close proximity to Lake Erie and Lake Huron. This species also likes open deciduous forests with low to moderate cover from the sun.

Primary threats to the Five-lined skink and its habitat include urban sprawl which leads to destruction and fragmentation of habitat, collection for the illegal pet trade, road mortality and predation from cats, dogs and raccoons.

It is illegal to search for, harass or capture a species at risk or destroy their habitat. Picture courtesy of Rob Tervo

References: COSEWIC assessment and update status report on the Five-lined Skink *Eumeces fasciatus* (Carolinian population and Great Lakes/ St. Lawrence population) in Canada. Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Ottawa. vii + 50 pp.

