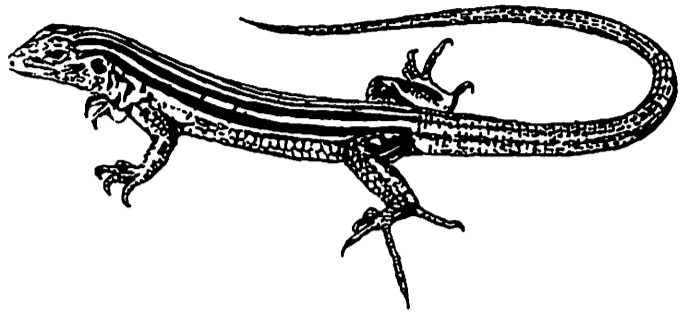


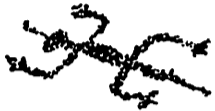
# Wupatki

National Monument  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

## Reptiles



During the Mesozoic Age, 65 to 225 million years ago, dinosaurs roamed the Wupatki area. These ancestors of our modern reptiles are now extinct, but we know of their existence from their fossilized footprints and bones.



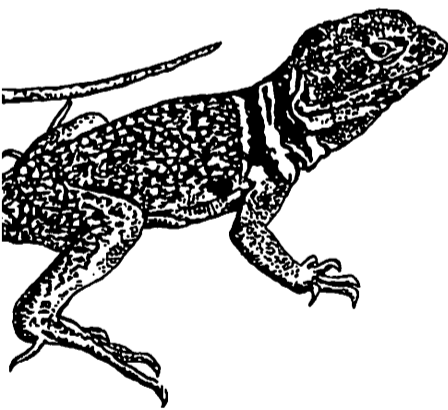
Lizards, snakes, turtles, tortoises, crocodiles, and alligators are the major types of reptiles still living today. The name "reptile" comes from the Latin word, reptum, which means "to creep." Reptiles are cold-blooded; they do not have an internal means for controlling their body temperature. To avoid overheating in the midday sun, they have to find protection in the shade of plants, in rock crevices, or in burrows.



About twenty species of lizards and snakes live in Wupatki and Sunset Crater National Monuments. Only the rattlesnakes are dangerous, but some of the lizards have a painful bite.

### LIZARDS

The most common lizard of Wupatki National Monument is the Side-blotched Lizard. This small dark green or grayish lizard has dark blue or black spots on each side behind the front legs. The male has a blue speckled band down its back. The Side-blotched Lizard eats insects, ticks, and scorpions.



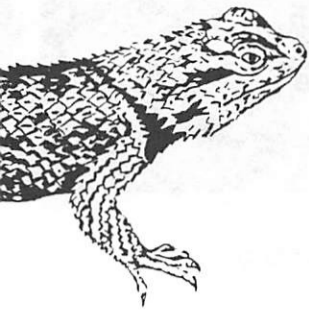
The large bright green lizard often seen around the ruins and on rocks, particularly near Lomaki ruins, is the Collared Lizard. The major distinguishing feature is the double black collar around its neck. Sometimes the Collared Lizard can be seen running on its two long hind legs. Medium-sized lizards, snakes, flowers, leaves, and insects are all a part of the Collared Lizard's diet.



The Short-horned Lizard, or "Horny Toad," is common in the Monuments but is not often seen. It has a round, flat body which blends well with its surroundings. Its diet consists exclusively of ants. The species in our area bears live young.

A small gray, brown, or nearly black lizard with a blue throat is the Eastern Fence Lizard. Eastern Fence Lizards living in the lava at Sunset Crater have developed a darker color than those living in lighter color rock. Insects, spiders and other small animals make up its diet.





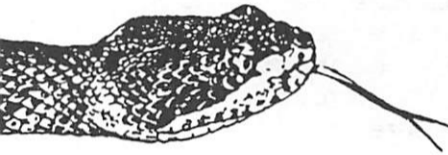
The Tree Lizard is another lizard that blends well with the surroundings. Frequently found in trees or on rocks, it is sometimes seen clinging head downward. This lizard is smaller than the Eastern Fence Lizard and has vivid blue or blue-green belly patches in the male. It feeds on insects and spiders.



**SNAKES**

Gopher Snakes are often seen in Wupatki Ruin and can be seen at Sunset Crater as well. This rodent-eating snake is yellow with large black or brown blotches. When threatened, it will mimic the behavior of a rattlesnake, hissing, coiling, and vibrating its tail. Gopher snakes are not venomous. They kill their prey by constriction and eat it whole.

The bright coloration of the Arizona Mountain Kingsnake makes it easy to identify. This non-poisonous snake has red bands bordered by black and is often confused with the poisonous coral snake. Its diet includes lizards, frogs, small mammals, birds, and other snakes, including rattlesnakes.



Rattlesnakes are the only dangerous snakes found in the area. Two local varieties are the Arizona Black Rattlesnake and the Hopi Rattlesnake, a small pinkish snake used in a dance ceremony. Rattlesnakes have a temperature-sensitive pit on each side of the face which helps them to locate their prey. Rattlesnakes bear live young.



Please view all the lizards and snakes that make their homes here from a distance. As at all National Parks, the animals and plants at Wupatki and Sunset Crater are protected by federal law.

**CHECKLIST OF WUPATKI AND SUNSET CRATER REPTILES**

\*Sunset Crater only      +Wupatki only  
-both Sunset Crater and Wupatki

**Snakes:**

- + Glossy Snake
- + Night Snake
- + Common King Snake
- Arizona Mountain King Snake
- + Sonoran Whipsnake
- + Striped Whipsnake
- Gopher Snake Eastern
- + Western Patch-nosed Snake
- + Western Rattlesnake
- + Hopi Rattlesnake
- Arizona Black Rattlesnake

**Lizards:**

- + Western Collard Lizard
- + Leopard Lizard
- + Lesser Earless Lizard
- Short-horned Lizard
- + Desert Spiny Lizard
- + Orange-headed Desert Spiny Lizard
- Eastern Fence Lizard
- + Side-blotched Lizard
- Tree Lizard
- + Western Whiptail
- + Plateau Whiptail
- + Little Striped Whiptail
- \* Many-lined Skink

Note: This list is not definitive.

