

little brown skink *Scincella lateralis*

Kingdom: Animalia

Division/Phylum: Chordata

Class: Reptilia

Order: Squamata

Family: Scincidae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

FEATURES

The little brown skink averages three to five and three-fourths inches in length and has smooth, shiny scales. Its body is golden brown to dark brown with dark stripes along the sides of the back. A “window” in the lower eyelid allows for vision when the eyelid is closed.

BEHAVIORS

The little brown skink may be found in the southern one-third of Illinois. This animal lives on the woodland floor, where it forages during the day. It is very difficult to see unless it runs, rustling leaves on the ground as it moves. Courtship and mating occur in late spring or early summer. Each female may deposit two clutches of about five eggs each. Eggs are often retained in the female’s body for a considerable period of time before they are deposited, a process that shortens the incubation period. Eggs are placed in rotten logs, stumps, leaf litter or under rocks. Eggs hatch in August. This skink eats worms, insects and other arthropods.

HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats

bottomland forests; upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

none

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