



Yakka Skinks in Brigalow Country



Yakka Skinks (*Egernia rugosa*) are listed as “vulnerable” under the *Australian Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* due to habitat loss.

Yakka Skinks are found only in Queensland, and specifically favour Brigalow Country.

Yakka Skinks need our help to protect their current population as they contribute to healthy ecosystems and biodiversity.

As omnivorous predators, Yakka Skinks help regulate populations of their prey, which often include insects and small vertebrates. By controlling these populations, they contribute to the balance within their ecosystem.

Threats to the Yakka Skink

Yakka skinks and cattle may share the same habitat, especially in agricultural areas where cattle graze near wetlands, forests, or across grasslands.

- ⚠ Land clearing and modification destroys the skink's habitat.
- ⚠ There is a risk of predation from feral animals in areas where they are not being managed.
- ⚠ Rabbit warren ripping (a process used to destroy rabbit burrows).

Threatened Ecological Community and its importance to Yakka Skinks

- ✓ Brigalow provides a crucial habitat for the Yakka Skink
- ✓ Dense vegetation, coupled with patches of open grassland, creates a suitable environment for these skinks to hunt and shelter.
- ✓ The conversion of Brigalow to farmland and pasture for cattle grazing has led to a decline in suitable habitats for the Yakka Skink.
- ✓ Protecting and restoring Brigalow is crucial for the conservation of the Yakka Skink.



FAST FACTS

- Yakka Skinks are a pale fawn colour to dark brown with a dark brown/black stripe from the neck to the tip of the tail.
- Up to 40cm in length
- Live in family units (average family sizes is 7 skinks)
- Active day, dusk and occasionally the night
- Life expectancy greater than 12 years

How land managers can help Yakka Skinks

Implement rotational grazing practices. This will reduce overgrazing which can lead to habitat degradation.

Provide alternative water sources for cattle to reduce their reliance on natural water sources, preventing contamination of natural waterways and reducing disturbance of skink habitat

Allow areas to rest and recover from grazing, helping to maintain vegetation cover and soil health.

Use fencing to protect sensitive habitats from cattle and control their access to allow for rest periods

Manage fuel loads on land appropriately with cool burns preferred for fire management

Leave or add woody debris or leaf litter to create micro-habitats

Sensitive habitats include hollows where rainwater collects.

Yakka Skink photography, front page from top: © Lauren Dibben, Atlas of Living Australia. License CC-BY-NC 3.0 (Au); © Jules Farquhar, Atlas of Living Australia. License CC-BY-NC 3.0 (Au), edited. This page: © Lauren Dibben, Atlas of Living Australia. License CC-BY-NC 3.0 (Au)

Mietta Morris

FBA Project Officer - Environment

☎ 07 4999 2858

@ mietta.morris@fba.org.au



Photo: Lauren Dibben

fba.org.au