



## Southern Heath Monitor *Varanus rosenbergi* (Mertens 1957)

### Size

Total length  
up to 1.5 m



Photo: Babs and Bert Wells/DEC

### Description

Blackish above, finely dotted with yellow or white, and with approximately 15 narrow black bands on the neck and body. Tail is laterally compressed, and alternately banded with black-brown and pale yellow colours, extending to the end of the tail. Belly is whitish, and reticulated with black or grey bands. Limbs are black, and spotted with cream to pale yellow colours.

Juveniles are brighter in colour with strong yellow banding. They have bright orange markings on the sides of the head, flanks and tail.

### Other Common Names

Heath goanna

### Distribution

The Southern Heath Monitor occurs in the far south-west of Western Australia, north and south of the Swan River, and in South Australia including Kangaroo Island. There are also isolated populations in Victoria and coastal New South Wales.

For further information regarding the distribution of this species please refer to [www.naturemap.dpaw.wa.gov.au](http://www.naturemap.dpaw.wa.gov.au)

### Habitat

Found in coastal heaths, humid woodlands, and wet and dry sclerophyll forests.

### Behaviour

The Southern Heath Monitor is terrestrial, day-active, and shelters in burrows, hollow rocks or rock crevices.

### Diet

The diet comprises reptiles, insects, small mammals, carrion and eggs.

### Breeding

The Southern Heath Monitor lays eggs, which it deposits and leaves in a burrow to incubate. Little else is known of their breeding patterns.

### Threatening processes

Anecdotal evidence suggests that young are vulnerable to predation by foxes. Sightings are common of younger individuals in areas that have been fox-baited compared to un-baited areas.

### Conservation status

Not applicable

### Management in Western Australia

- Ongoing fox baiting in Western Australia as part of the Western Shield fox-control initiative will indirectly benefit goannas by reducing potential predators of the young, and increasing their food sources.

### Selected references

Bush, B., Maryan, B., Browne-Cooper, R., and Robinson, D. (1995). A Guide to the Reptiles and Frogs of the Perth Region. University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, Western Australia.

Cogger H.G. (1992). Reptiles and Amphibians of Australia. Reed Books Australia.

Last updated 8 February 2012, for further information please contact [fauna@dpaw.wa.gov.au](mailto:fauna@dpaw.wa.gov.au)

### Further information

Contact your local office of the Department of Environment and Conservation.

See the department's website for the latest information: [www.dec.wa.gov.au](http://www.dec.wa.gov.au).

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