



SAVING OUR SPECIES

# Barrier Range dragon

*Ctenophorus mirrityana*

Endangered

The Barrier Range dragon is an endangered lizard restricted to rocky outcrops in ranges and gorges where there are lots of rock crevices and cracks that they can hide in.

The dragon grows up to 220 millimetres in length. The male is grey or grey-brown with cream to orange spots on its neck and flanks. Females are less colourful.

Earlier thought to be an outlying population of the tawny crevice-dragon (*Ctenophorus decresii*), a common species in South Australia extending into western New South Wales, it wasn't until 2013 that the species was recognised as a separate taxon, *Ctenophorus mirrityana*. 'Mirrityana' is the Aboriginal Paakantyi word for 'out in the sunlight', referring to their habit of basking on rocks during the day when they leave the safety of crevices and burrows to feed.

It is currently known from three remote sites near Mutawintji National Park and Broken Hill in western New South Wales.

**A new species to science, being first described in 2013, rock engravings of lizards in Mutawintji National Park suggest the Barrier Range dragon may have been known to aboriginal people for millennia.**

The dragon's diet consists mainly of a mix of small insects, such as beetles and termites, as well as the leaves and flowers of small herbs in their environment.

Breeding begins in the lead up to spring and can continue until early November. Males use head bobbing courtship behaviour from prominent rock positions to attract females. Multiple egg clutches may be produced each season, with subsequent clutches usually containing less eggs than the previous. Usually three to seven eggs are laid in the relatively humid environment of the burrow. Eggs are known to hatch within 55 to 89 days depending on temperature stability. On average, hatchlings weigh 1.8 grams and are around 87 millimetres long.

# Support local action and help save the Barrier Range dragon



Barrier Range dragon (*Ctenophorus mirrityana*) basking in the sun, Mutawintji National Park.  
Photo: Marc Irvin /DPIE

The Barrier Range dragon is endangered in New South Wales, mainly due to habitat degradation by goats that browse on vegetation and disturbance to rock habitat, including pollution of key crevice habitat by scats.

Other threats to the species include:

- habitat degradation by livestock and rabbits, particularly during drought, which may decrease populations and impede dispersal
- predation by cats and foxes, impacting upon local populations
- too frequent fire (where there are multiple burns within 20 years)
- inappropriate land management practices and/or change in land use
- uncertainty with respect to the species habitat requirements, distribution, reproductive ecology, and the effects of different predators on breeding success.

Saving our Species (SoS) is working in partnership with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and other organisations and private landowners to save the Barrier Range dragon.



A male Barrier Range dragon (*Ctenophorus mirrityana*).  
Photo: Marc Irvin /DPIE

Management activities are being undertaken through the SoS program at two priority management sites, Mutawintji National Park and near Broken Hill in western New South Wales.

The recovery effort aims to:

- control vertebrate pest populations, e.g. foxes, cats and rabbits
- reduce or exclude grazing in some areas to allow regeneration of vegetation
- retain understorey shrubs
- maintain exfoliating and soil surface rocks.

## You too can help

To support the ongoing success of the recovery of the Barrier Range Dragon, you can report sightings to NSW BioNet via [info@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@environment.nsw.gov.au) or 1300 361 967, or try the new Reptile Reporter at <https://ee.kobotoolbox.org/x/#BYP3Aqm3>

**SoS is a NSW Government flagship program targeting on-ground action to secure threatened plants and animals from extinction. The program aims to increase the number of species that can survive securely in the wild.**

**SoS can only succeed if we work together. We need your support to ensure that today's actions help to secure the future of NSW's threatened species.**

**Find out more about threatened species in New South Wales and the SoS program at [environment.nsw.gov.au/SOS](http://environment.nsw.gov.au/SOS)**