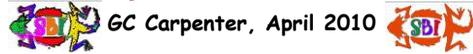


Grand Canyon/Colorado River Herps



Lizards--Lizards are the most commonly seen herps in the Grand Canyon. Most bask in the sun to warm up and are active during the day, while banded geckos are nocturnal. Important characteristics for identifying different species are size, color, pattern, posture and behavior.



Side-blotched Lizard (*Uta stansburiana*)--small lizards, typically ground-dwelling, but are often seen climbing on rocks, and can easily be confused with tree lizards. "Utas", however, have a blotch behind the foreleg (armpit), and lack brilliant throat coloration. Their display involves a rapid series of front-legged push ups. Abundant in nearly all reaches of the canyon.



Tree Lizard (*Urosaurus ornatus*)--small climbing lizards that favor vertical surfaces, usually cliff faces and large boulders near the water. Long tails and incomplete dorsal banding. males have colorful orange, green, or blue throats, and blue bellies whereas females lack belly coloration and may have orange or yellow throats. The display is a series of four-legged push-ups--two slow, followed by a variable number of more rapid push-ups.



Desert Spiny Lizard (*Sceloporus magister*)--common in certain stretches of the corridor, pointy scales give this species a spiny appearance. Can be seen basking on boulders and in shrubs, may behave quite aggressively. Dark blotches anterior to the forearms often lead to misidentification as collared lizards. Males have bright blue throats and bellies, while females, during reproductive season, have bright orange heads.



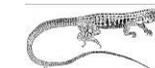
Collared Lizard (*Crotaphytus collaris & bicinctores*). Both Eastern and Great Basin Collared lizards likely exist in the canyon, where their ranges abut. Most frequently observed in cobble or boulder fields and side canyons. Possess dark collar, smooth scales, and distinct profile (above). Can run very fast--sometimes only on their back legs("bipedal") and may consume smaller lizard species.



Desert Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma platyrhinos*) This lizard (found at Lee's Ferry) closely matches the color of the substrate. Horned lizards are ant-eaters, and are often seen around ant mounds or trails.



Chuckwalla (*Sauromalus ater*) adult males (below) are large and black/gray while juveniles (right) have bright orange coloration and have banded tails. These herbivorous lizards like HOT temperatures, are reclusive and easily spooked.



Tiger Whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris*) -- elongate lizards with pointed snouts. Nomadic, ground-dwellers that forage for arthropods beneath shrubs and grasses. Some other whiptail species are all female.



Western banded Gecko (*Coleonyx variegatus*) this nocturnal is small and delicate and seen infrequently in the canyon. Juveniles may have distinct banding while the adult pattern is often mottled.

