Reptiles of Barrow Island, Western Australia

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Lying ~50 kilometres off Western Australia's Pilbara coast, Barrow Island is a semi-arid landscape dominated by limestone valleys, ridges and escarpments, sand plains and dunes, termite mounds and prickly spinifex hummocks. Below ground lies a mysterious, perpetually dark world of caves and cavities.

FLAP-FOOTED LIZARDS
Family Pygopodidae

Greg Harold
Ningaloo Worm Lizard
Aprasia rostrata

Ru Somaweera
Burton's Legless Lizard
Lialis burtonis

Ru Somaweera
Western Hooded Scaly-foot
Pygopus nigriceps

Ru Somaweera
Northern Delma
Delma borea

Steve Wilson
Sharp-snouted Delma
Delma nasuta

Ru Somaweera
Excitable Delma
Delma tincta

GECKOS
Family Diplodactylidae
and
Family Gekkonidae

Jari Cornelis
Spotted Pilbara Rock Dtella
Gehyra punctata

Greg Harold
Pilbara Island Dtella
Gehyra ocellata

Ru Somaweera
Variegated Dtella
Gehyra variegata

Ru Somaweera
Bynoe's Gecko
Heteronotia binoei

Steve Wilson
Sandplain Gecko
Lucasium woodwardi

Ru Somaweera
Southern Phasmid Gecko
Strophurus jeanae

SKINKS
Family Scincidae

Ru Somaweera
Desert Rainbow Skink
Carlia triacantha

Ru Somaweera
Peron's Snake-eyed Skink
Cryptoblepharus plagiocephalus

Jari Cornelis
Western Pilbara Lined Ctenotus
Ctenotus pallasotus

Steve Wilson
Giant Desert Ctenotus
Ctenotus grandis

Steve Wilson
Nimble Ctenotus
Ctenotus hanloni

Steve Wilson
Leopard Skink
Ctenotus pantherinus

Steve Wilson
Rock Ctenotus
Ctenotus saxatilis

Bob Valentic
North-western Sandy-loam Ctenotus
Ctenotus serventyi

Ru Somaweera
Spinifex Slender Blue-tongue
Cyclodomorphus melanops

Ru Somaweera
Northern Bar-lipped Skink
Eremiascincus isolepis

Steve Wilson
Broad-banded Sand-swimmer
Eremiascincus richardsonii

Steve Wilson
North-western Sandslider
Lerista bipes

Steve Wilson
Elegant Slider
Lerista elegans

Greg Harold
Muller's Three-toad Slider
Lerista muelleri

Ru Somaweera
Common Dwarf Skink
Menetia greyii

Steve Wilson
West-coast Pale-freckled Morethia
Morethia lineoocellata

Brendan Schembri
Fire-tail Skink
Morethia ruficauda

Bob Valentic
Ornate Snake-eyed Skink
Notoscincus ornatus

Ru Somaweera
Spinifex Snake-eyed Skink
Proablepharus reginae

DRAGONS
Family Agamidae

Ru Somaweera
Western Ring-tailed Dragon
Ctenophorus caudicinctus

Steve Wilson
Central Netted Dragon
Ctenophorus nuchalis

Steve Wilson
Western Netted Dragon
Ctenophorus reticulatus

Ru Somaweera
Horner's Dragon
Lophognathus horneri

Ru Somaweera
Dwarf Bearded Dragon
Pogona minor

MONITORS or GOANNAS
Family Varanidae

Ru Somaweera
Spiny-tailed Monitor
Varanus acanthurus

Steve Wilson
Short-tailed Pygmy Monitor
Varanus brevicauda

Ru Somaweera
Perentie
Varanus giganteus

BLIND SNAKES
Family Typhlopidae

Steve Wilson
Pilbara Blind Snake
Anilios ammodytes

Bob Valentic
Northern Beaked Blind Snake
Anilios grypus

Ru Somaweera
Barrow Island Blind Snake
Anilios longissimus

HARD-SHELLED SEA TURTLES
Family Cheloniidae

Ru Somaweera
Loggerhead Turtle
Caretta caretta

Ru Somaweera
Green Turtle
Chelonia mydas

Ru Somaweera
Hawksbill Turtle
Eretmochelys imbricata

Ru Somaweera
Flatback Turtle
Natator depressus

Ru Somaweera
A turtle nesting beach at Barrow Island
High density of Green Turtle tracks at South Beach

PYTHONS
Family Pythonidae

Ru Somaweera
Children's Python
Antaresia childreni

VENOMOUS LAND SNAKES
Family Elapidae

Ru Somaweera
North-western Shovel-nosed Snake
Brachyurophis approximans

Ru Somaweera
Moon Snake
Furina ornata

Chris Jolly
Rufous Whipsnake
Demansia rufescens

Ru Somaweera
Mulga/ King Brown Snake
Pseudechis australis

SEA SNAKES
Family Elapidae

Ru Somaweera
Short-nosed Sea Snake
Aipysurus apraefrontalis

Ru Somaweera
Dubois's Sea Snake
Aipysurus dubosii

Ru Somaweera
Leaf-scaled Sea Snake
Aipysurus foliosquama

Ru Somaweera
Olive Sea Snake
Aipysurus laevis

Ru Somaweera
West Coast Turtle-headed Sea Snake
Emydocephalus ornatus

Ru Somaweera
Spectacled Sea Snake
Hydrophis kingii

Ru Somaweera
Elegant Sea Snake
Hydrophis elegans

Ru Somaweera
Olive-headed Sea Snake
Hydrophis major

Ru Somaweera
Ornate Sea Snake
Hydrophis ocellatus

Ru Somaweera
Horned Sea Snake
Hydrophis peronii

Ru Somaweera
Small-headed Sea Snake
Hydrophis macdowelli

Ru Somaweera
Yellow-bellied Sea Snake
Hydrophis platurus

Ru Somaweera
Stokes' Sea Snake
Hydrophis stokesii

The **47 species of terrestrial reptiles** and the **17 species of marine reptiles** known from Barrow Island and its surrounding seas are broadly typical of those on the adjacent coast and mainland. They include the island's largest apex predator, the Perentie, and a variety of nocturnal and diurnal snakes and lizards. The endemic Barrow Island Blind Snake is possibly the world's only true reptilian trogylodite, living in cavities deep below the surface. Barrow Island is also an important nesting site for Flatback and Green Turtles. Additional species of sea snakes (e.g. Geometrical Sea Snake- *Hydrophis czeblukovi*) may also occur in the shallow waters around Barrow Island.

Thanks to its isolation, the island of more than 200 square kilometres is a refuge where species severely depleted on the mainland continue to thrive in the absence of introduced predators and competitors. Barrow Island enjoys the highest level of environmental protection as an 'A-class' reserve, yet the land is shared with Chevron's highly productive Gorgon and WA Oil operations.

It is incumbent on all the island's stake-holders, involved in heritage, conservation and development, to ensure Barrow Island maintains its status as a sanctuary free of feral plants and animals. This is critical to the future management of this unique ecosystem.

Beware, the feral gecko!

The Asian House Gecko (*Hemidactylus fenatus*) is a seasoned traveller, and has hitchhiked among cargo to become the world's most widespread and invasive lizard species. It is now established in many settlements across northern Australia. Please keep an eye for a gecko with the following features and inform authorities if you spot one:

- The distinctive 'chuck…chuck…chuck' call
- Scalloped margin to the vertical pupil
- Bands of small raised tubercles on the original tail
- Broad, flat toes, lacking an expanded disc at the tip

Ru Somaweera

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