

**Post-translocation monitoring of shore skink (*Oligosoma smithi*) on two islands in New Zealand: dispersal, habitat use and capture rates.**

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Species translocations in New Zealand have been heavily avian-biased, and previous reptile translocations have mainly focused on endangered species reintroduced to restricted offshore islands. However, there has been an increasing demand in management plans of public-access island reserves to include the translocation of more common native reptile species, as part of the ecosystem restoration of these islands. Relatively common species such as the shore skink (*Oligosoma smithi*) are good candidates for initial reptile translocation to these islands because of their large historical geographical distribution and they have been used as indicator species in many restoration plans, particularly for pest-eradication projects. This study documents the first reintroduction project for this species. Two populations of shore skinks were established on two public accessible, pest-free island reserves in the Hauraki Gulf, North Island, from a mainland source. Dispersal and movement were recorded using a combination of pitfall traps, funnel traps and hand-searching. Capture rates, habitat use and the presence of neonates were recorded and compared to the source population from January to November 2007. The different trapping methods were also compared to assess capture efficiency. Preliminary results showed a decrease in capture rates over time due to seasonal effects, with most skink captures after January, been by hand-searching. Generally, skinks were captured at the coastal borderline between sand/ boulder and grass. Neonates were sighted and caught from February onwards, confirming the first island-born individuals on both islands. This ongoing study will incorporate the use of artificial refuges and tracking tunnels to increase capture rates. Data from this study will provide baseline information for evaluating translocation success in future shore skink translocations.