

# It's a 'stink'.

The day Amelie found a brown creature under her bed...



## Recognition

Common skinks are often abundant in coastal locations where they are often a dark or black colour. In other places they are brown with irregular stripes.

They can be distinguished from the similar brown skink by their straw coloured iris (brown skinks have a brown iris). Common skinks are not threatened.



We call ourselves researchers here at Greerton because we don't know so many things but we always want to find out. We weren't sure what this creature's actual name was, whether we might be able to let it live with our frogs (if it wasn't on their lunch menu), where it best liked to live and what its food was.



So straight away we got out the laptop and began investigating. It was either a skink or a gekko and as we looked at its shape, we decided it was a skink, the common variety. These creatures are all protected so we realised we wouldn't be able to put it into 'captivity' with our frogs but would have to let it go. "It has a long tail. Mine might be a gekko. It is, it is a lizard. Mine must be a gekko. They love hot rocks.. .because they like hot rocks". (L) "Where should we put him?" (A) "I think in my hideout... **It's a stink!**"

After lots of conversations, Amelia carefully placed it under a pot plant, because she thought it would have shelter, protection and food. Little did we know that the first chance it got, it would be off out of the plant cover and up the ramp. It was an adventurer! Perhaps this is why it ended up under your bed Amelie!

## My thoughts on your learning Amelie....

Amelie, you have so many ideas, theories about how the world works and added to this, a thirst to explore! Facts and figures don't matter really in all of this exploration because it is your imaginative brain that is tirelessly working at present. However, facts and figures are relevant inside your investigations as they become meaningfully focussed on. So at one point you declared it had four toes, and as we looked at the picture and counted again you discovered a little one, hidden at first from your counting eye! Whether it was a gekko or a skink was something that 'Mr Google' enabled us to figure out by careful observation, but the delight in exploring this creature couldn't be overshadowed by the factual detail. Could we find it a suitable home though, so your growing ideas about 'looking after creatures in our world' could be satisfied? Now this was worth exploring because unless we care about the creatures in our gardens we won't care about the rainforest destruction or the ice melt in the Antarctic, so says Richard Louve, author of 'The Last Child in the Woods'.

## How might we stretch this learning further?

Listening to you is our first priority, because it is here that you have your most potent store of motivation to explore further. Your Mum and Dad are pretty awesome in doing this and we will follow their lead. The very next day you brought a courgette into Mitchell Street as another indication of your love of exploring the natural world. It was huge and just begged to be eaten. A quick search for ingredients and we were off to the table, surrounded by a growing group of friends to make Courgette fritters. You told me that you didn't like these but you wanted to cook them anyway and then of course your bravery triumphed as you tasted a small piece. Four fritters later.... This combination of curious, brave, imaginative, spirited theorising will ensure you keep us all on our learning toes!



16 January 2018

Arohanui Lorraine

