

# FIELD GUIDE OF THE REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS OF DOMINICA

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# CARIBBEAN & MEXICAN LANDFROGS

## NATIVE SPECIES



Arboreal and terrestrial

Preliminary genetic data collected in 2021 suggest that the *Eleutherodactylus* populations native to Dominica belong to a single taxon. Nevertheless, the *Eleutherodactylus* populations in high-elevation montane forests have a call that differs from those in drier habitats (one to two extra notes in the high-elevation populations). However, no simple morphological criterion allows for the discrimination of these two taxa in the field. Therefore, in the current state of knowledge, it is premature to label the presence of the two taxa *E. martinicensis* and *E. amplinympha* in Dominica and have chosen to treat the native species of *Eleutherodactylus* under the pair *E. martinicensis*/*E. amplinympha* pending more in-depth sampling.

## DOMINICA FROG GOUNOUJ

*Eleutherodactylus amplinympha*

## MARTINIQUE FROG

*Eleutherodactylus martinicensis*

Head of the females proportionally very large

Great diversity of colour patterns

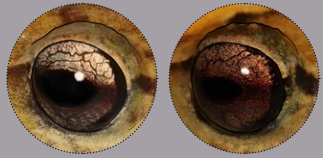


Males  
Fresh Water Lake



Females  
Fresh Water Lake

Free toes  
(absence of webbing)

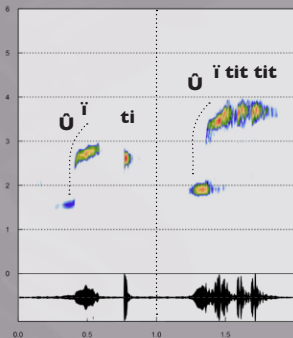


Iris of varying colours:  
burgundy or grey to gold



Size: 15 to 50 mm  
Females > 35 mm

Extract from the call of two males  
Left: Morne Diablotin, 960 m  
Right: Fresh Water Lake, 800 m



The call of *Eleutherodactylus martinicensis*/*amplinympha* from Dominica is a bitonal whistle. Each call consists of 2 to 4 high notes. The first note, which is not very distinct (fixed frequency of 1.5 to 2 kHz depending on the population), is immediately followed by the second, more powerful and distinctly ascending note. This second note has a higher pitch with a maximum frequency level that varies (according to altitude) between 2.5 and 4 kHz. In the high-elevation populations, these two notes are followed by 1 to 3 short high notes (up to 3.6 kHz).  
The call may be pronounced "Ō-ī / Ō-ī tit" or "Ō-ī tit tit" depending on the population and the excitement of the males. Visually (comparison of sonograms), the distinction with *E. johnstonei* is obvious.

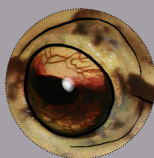
# CARIBBEAN & MEXICAN LANDFROGS

EXOTIC SPECIES



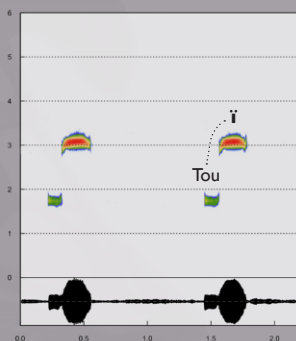
Arboreal and terrestrial

Upper part of iris golden or copper coloured, bounded by a burgundy band with the colour diffusing out the upper iris



Size: 15 to 35 mm

Extract of a male's call (Martinique)

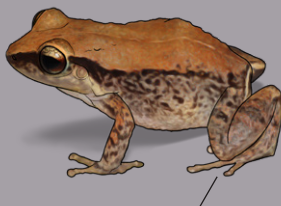


## LESSER ANTILLEAN FROG GOUNOUJ

NA

*Eleutherodactylus johnstonei*

Great diversity of colour patterns



Free toes (absence of webbing)

The call of *Eleutherodactylus johnstonei* is a bitonal whistle. Each call consists of two powerful and relatively high-pitched notes. The first note is very distinct and has a frequency of 2 kHz (+/- 1800 Hz); the second is around 3 kHz (+/- 3200 Hz). These values change significantly between populations.

The call may be pronounced "Tou-i ... Tou-i ... Tou-i ...".

Unlike *Eleutherodactylus martinicensis/amplinympa*, the second note is constant in frequency (i.e., the *i* drags on the same frequency).

## CARIBBEAN & MEXICAN LANDFROGS

EXOTIC SPECIES



Terrestrial

Gold mottled pattern on a black background



Size: 21 to 36 mm

### VIRGIN ISLANDS YELLOW FROG

*Euhyas lenta* / *Eleutherodactylus lentus*

NA

Adult female



Free toes  
(absence of webbing)

Adult male



Adult male



## NEOTROPICAL THIN-TOED FROGS

NATIVE SPECIES



Terrestrial

"Fred", last captive adult male (2019)

### MOUNTAIN CHICKEN CRAPAUD

*Leptodactylus fallax*

CR

Free toes  
(absence of webbing)



Imago



Sizes:  
Imago: 30 mm  
Adult: from 160 to 200 mm

# TYPICAL TREEFROGS

EXOTIC SPECIES



2006  
The Cuban tree frog was first introduced in 2006. It was reportedly eradicated before being reintroduced in 2018

Arboreal



Large tree frog with a wide variety of coloration and patterns: macules, mottling, staining or solid coloring



Size: 50 to 100 mm

CUBAN TREEFROG  
*Osteopilus septentrionalis*

NA



Webbed toes



EXOTIC SPECIES



2018

Arboreal



Elongated macules on the back. Usually one to two pairs of spots in the shape of a boomerang. In dorsal view, these spots form a )(



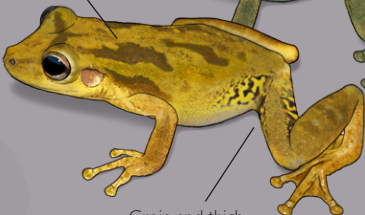
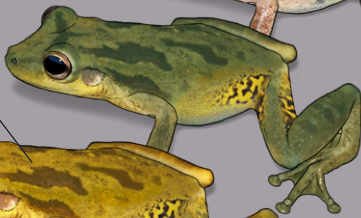
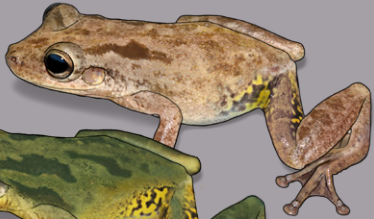
Size: 34 to 45.5 mm

VENEZUELAN SNOUDED TREEFROG  
*Scinax x-signatus*

NA



Webbed toes



Groin and thigh marbled with yellow

During the mating season, the males have a yellow to greenish tint

## GROUNDLIZARDS

### NATIVE SPECIES



Terrestrial

### DOMINICA GROUNDLIZARD ABÒLÒ

LC

*Pholidoscelis fuscatus*



Adult male



Adult female



Juvenile

The juvenile colouration is preserved up to a size of about 13 cm (length from snout to cloaca), then the patterns and colouring evolve with age and size.



Sizes:

Males: up to 50 cm (25 cm snout to vent length)

Females: up to 30 cm (15 cm snout to vent length)

Juveniles: up to 26 cm (13 cm snout to vent length)

# IGUANAS

## NATIVE SPECIES



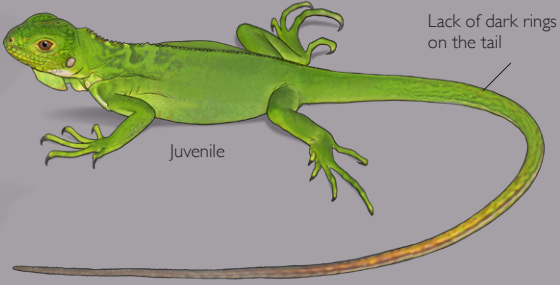
Arboreal and terrestrial

## LESSER ANTILLAN IGUANA

LÉZA

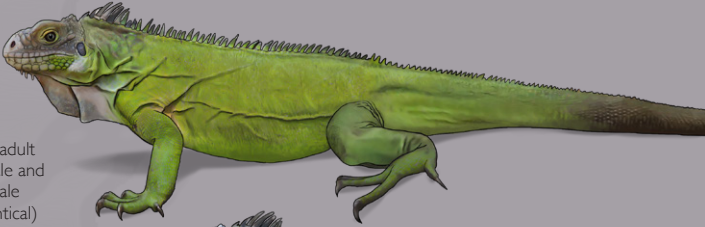
*Iguana delicatissima*

CR



Juvenile

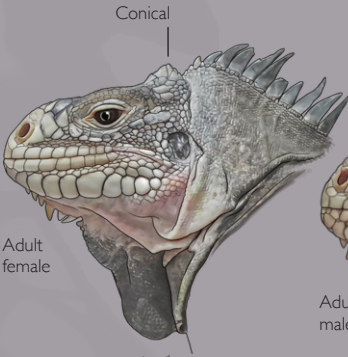
Lack of dark rings on the tail



Subadult (male and female identical)

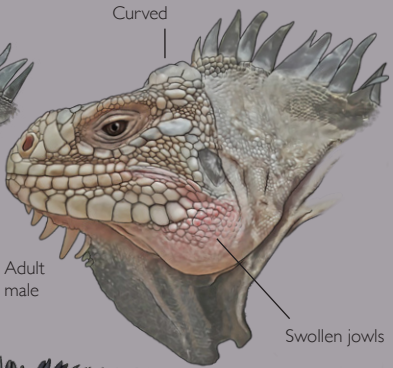


Adult females can also appear dark in colour similar to adult males



Conical

Adult female



Curved

Adult male

Swollen jowls



Adult male

Size: 1.10 m (maximum: 1.40 m)

# IGUANAS

EXOTIC SPECIES



Arboreal and terrestrial

## GREEN IGUANA

*Iguana iguana iguana*  
*Iguana iguana rhinolopha*

NA

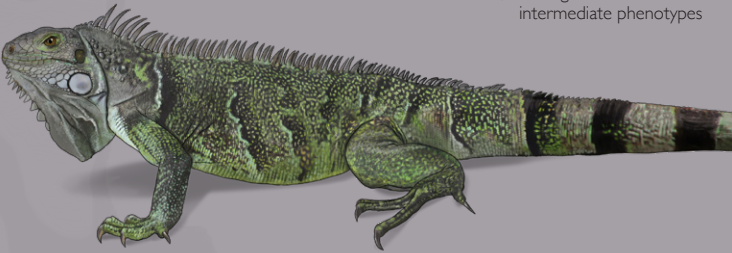
Presence of a dark line on the shoulder

Ringed tail

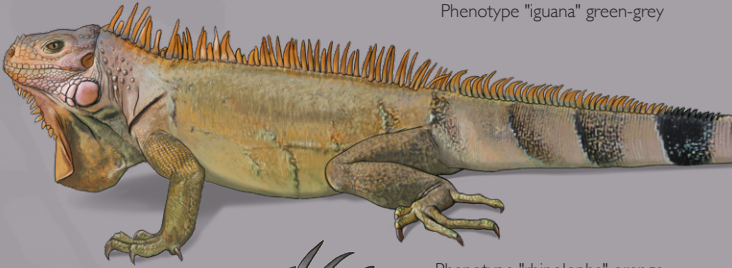
Juvenile



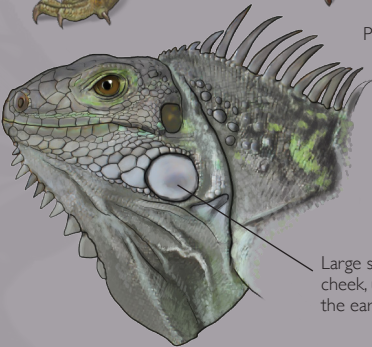
Frequent hybridization between the two subspecies, natives to South America and Central America, resulting in individuals with intermediate phenotypes



Phenotype "iguana" green-grey



Phenotype "rhinolopha" orange



Large scale on the cheek, underneath the eardrum



Size: 1.50 m (maximum: 2 m)

# ANOLES

NATIVE SPECIES



Arboreal and terrestrial

Variation of the size of the caudal and nuchal crest of males depending on the individual

## DOMINICA ANOLE ZANDOLI

LC

*Ctenonotus oculatus*



Adult males



Adult male



Adult male



Bright orange dewlap



Blue Iris feature



"montanus" form  
Greenish tint

Size: about 20 cm

ANOLES

DOMINICA ANOLE  
ZANDOLI

LC

*Ctenonotus oculatus*



Adult female

Adult female

EXOTIC  
SPECIES

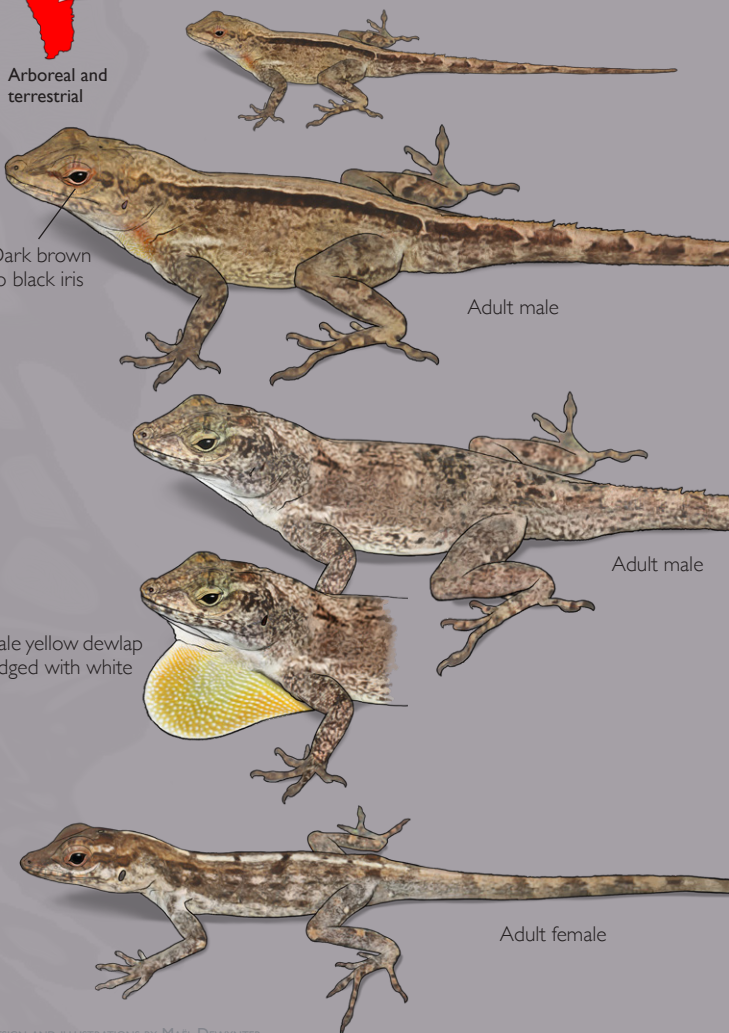
PUERTO RICAN CRESTED ANOLE

NA

*Ctenonotus cristatellus*



Arboreal and  
terrestrial



Dark brown  
to black iris

Adult male

Adult male

Pale yellow dewlap  
edged with white

Adult female

# TYPICAL TEGULETS

## NATIVE SPECIES

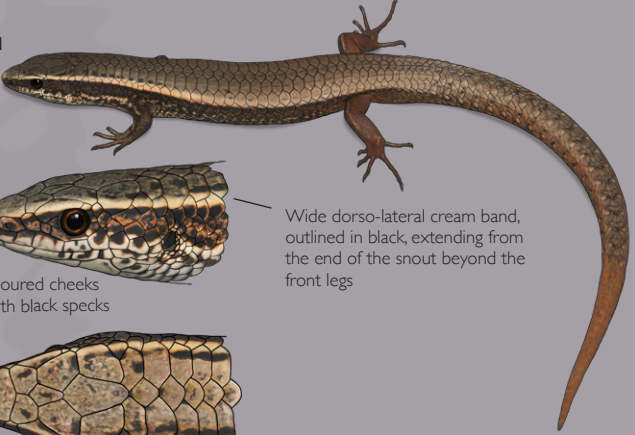


Terrestrial

## ROUGH-SCALED TEGULET

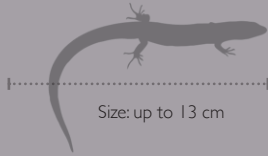
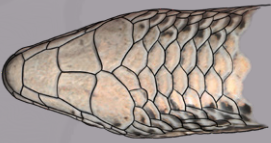
*Gymnophthalmus pleii*

**NT**



Cream coloured cheeks and lips with black specks

Wide dorso-lateral cream band, outlined in black, extending from the end of the snout beyond the front legs



Size: up to 13 cm

## ESPÈCE EXOTIQUE



Before 1980

Terrestrial

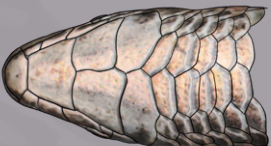
## SMOOTH-SCALED TEGULET

*Gymnophthalmus underwoodi*

**NA**



Dark cheeks and lips



Size: up to 10 cm

# SUN SKINKS

## NATIVE SPECIES



Terrestrial

## Dominica Skink

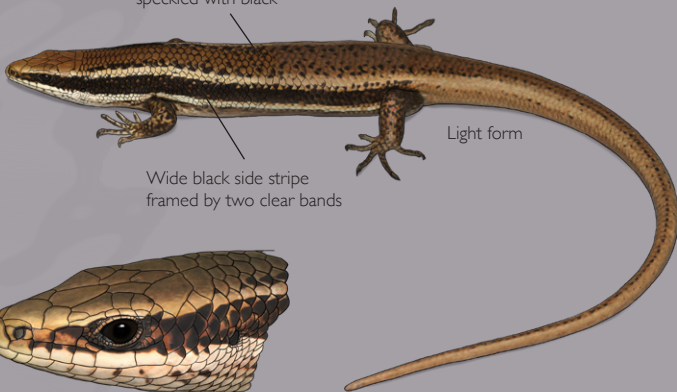
*Mabuya dominicana*

LC



Dark form

Red or bronze back, speckled with black

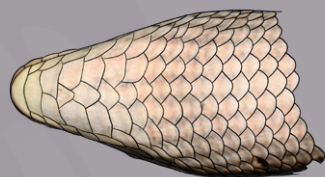


Light form

Wide black side stripe framed by two clear bands



Cream coloured lips



### ! POSSIBLE CONFUSIONS

Dominica Skink



Eyelids  
Cream coloured lips

Rough-scaled Tegulet

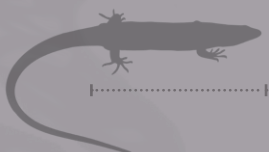


No eyelid  
Cream coloured cheeks and lips with black specks

Smooth-scaled Tegulet



No eyelid  
Dark lips



Sizes:  
Adults: up to 10 cm in length from snout to vent  
Hatchlings: 30 mm length snout to vent

## GECKOLETS

### NATIVE SPECIES



Only in mid to high elevation

Terrestrial

### WESTERN MARTINIQUE GECKOLET

LC

*Sphaerodactylus festus*

The Western Martinique Geckolet is distinguished from the Southern Leeward Geckolet by the presence of two symmetrical white spots on the shoulders.

White spots in the shape of a ring



Very elongated snout



Size: from 5 to 6.5 cm

### NATIVE SPECIES



Terrestrial

### SOUTHERN LEEWARD GECKOLET

LC

*Sphaerodactylus fantasticus fuga*



Adult female

Brown mottled pattern on yellow head



Adult male

Black or dark blue head speckled with white spot



Size: up to 5.5 cm

# GECKOS

EXOTIC SPECIES

## TROPICAL HOUSE GECKO

NA

MABOUYA

*Hemidactylus mabouia*



Date unknown

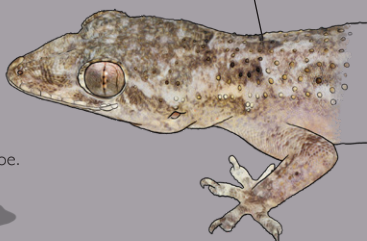
Arboreal and terrestrial



Many tubercles on the neck



Lamellae of the 4th toe (feet) not reaching the base of the toe.



Size: 4.6 to 6.8 cm in length from snout to vent

EXOTIC SPECIES

## COMMON HOUSE GECKO

NA

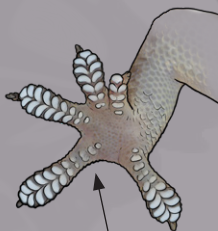
*Hemidactylus frenatus*



2021

Spots form a line

Arboreal and terrestrial

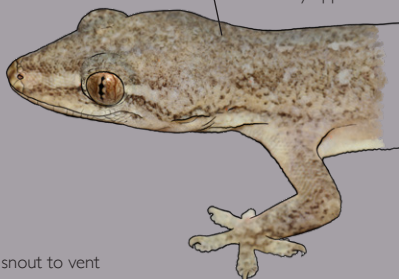


Lamellae of the 4th toe (feet) reaching the base of the toe.



Absence of tubercles on the back of the neck

Velvety appearance



Size: 4.5 à 5.4 cm in length from snout to vent

# LEAF-TOED GECKOS

NATIVE SPECIES



Arboreal

## TURNIP-TAILED GECKO

*Thecadactylus aff. rapicauda*

**NT**



Palms are very wide



Size: about 20 cm

# TYPICAL BOAS

NATIVE SPECIES



Arboreal and terrestrial

**DOMINICA BOA**  
**TÈT CHIEN**  
*Boa nebulosa*

LC

Pale juvenile body colour.  
Greater contrast of colouration  
on the tail



Adult are darker in colour.  
Greater contrast of colouration  
on the tail

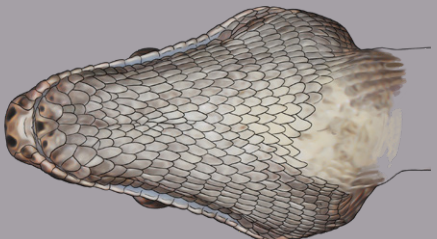
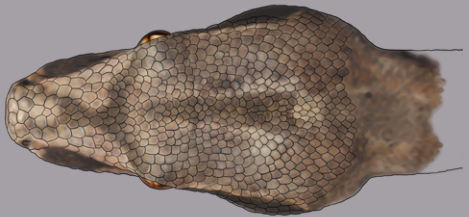


Juvenile



Adult

Juvenile with dark mask



Size: up to 1.85 m

# NEOTROPICAL REAR-FANGED SNAKES

## NATIVE SPECIES



Arboreal and terrestrial

**DOMINICA RACER**  
**KOUWÈS Nwè**  
*Alsophis sibonius*

**LC**



Juveniles pale in colour with a brown dorsal band

The colour evolved with age and adults are often dark brown or sometimes black with yellow or beige lateral spots



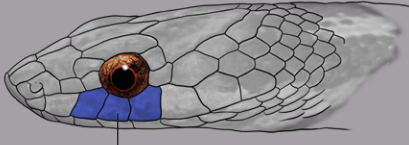
Juvenile

Pointed snout

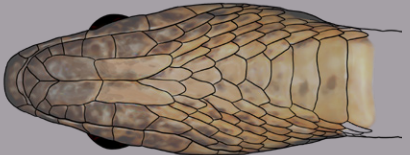
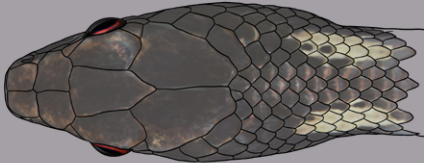


Beige belly speckled with black at the front of the body darkening towards the tail

Underside of the tail homogeneous brown to black



Three labial scales in contact with the eye



Sizes:  
 Juveniles: from 18.6 to 24 cm in length snout to vent  
 Adults: up to 90 cm in length from snout to vent

# NEOTROPICAL REAR-FANGED SNAKES

## NATIVE SPECIES



Terrestrial

LEEWARD GROUND SNAKE  
*KOUWÉS JENGA*  
*Erythrolamprus juliae*

LC

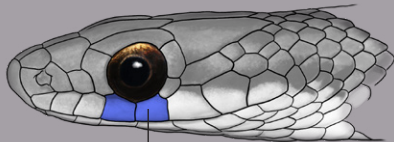


Beige, black or olive coloured body mottled with white

Typical ventral colouration is white and black

White underside of the tail sometimes dotted with black

Rounded snout



Two labial scales in contact with the eye



Sizes:  
Adults: up to 45.8 cm snout length  
and up to 62.7 cm total length

# BLINDSNAKES

## INDIGENOUS SPECIES



Burrowing habits

## DOMINICA BLINDSNAKE KOULEV

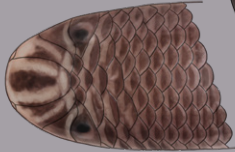
LC

*Antillotyphlops dominicanus*

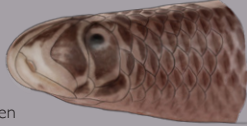
Uniformly pinkish brown to almost totally black depending on the individual



White spot around the cloaca



Snout tip and chin are white



Isolated white scales often present under the belly



Size: up to 38.5 cm

## EXOTIC SPECIES



Burrowing habits

Not detected  
To be watched

## BRAHMINY BLINDSNAKE

NA

*Indotyphlops braminus*

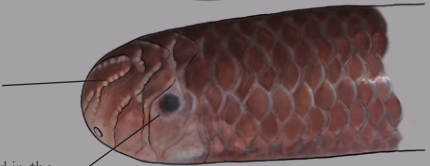


Dorsal colouration brown to burgundy



Blue colouring during moulting

Dark top of the head, without yellow spots  
Small clear glands aligned in "beads necklace" under the cephalic scales



Small eye, positioned in the upper half of the ocular scale (twice as long than wide)



Size: from 10 to 15 cm

# TURTLES AND TORTOISES

**EXOTIC SPECIES**

Date unknown  
Suspected feral populations

**RED-FOOTED TORTOISE**  
**MORROCOY**

**NA**

*Chelonoidis carbonarius*



Head punctuated with orange-yellow

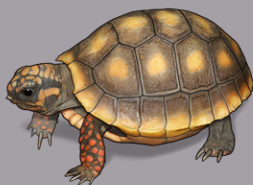
Domed shell

Terrestrial

Red or orange spots on the front legs



Unwebbed toes



Hatchling

Sizes

Hatchling: from 4.6 to 5.2 cm  
Adult: from 23 to 82 cm

**EXOTIC SPECIES**

**ANTILLEAN SLIDER**

**NA**

*Trachemys stejnegeri*



Aquatic

The distinction with *Trachemys scripta elegans*, widely introduced in the French West Indies, is complex and often impossible to identify from a distance if the individual is a little dark

The Antillean Slider is cited for Dominica but we did not observe any individuals



Adult female

Webbed toes



Sinuous patterns, fading with age



Sizes

Hatchling: from 2.5 to 4 cm  
Adult: from 9 to 30 cm

# SEATURTLES

MARINE SPECIES

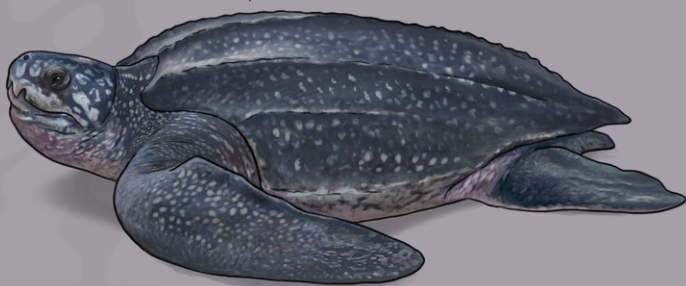


## LEATHERBACK SEATURTLE

*Dermochelys coriacea*

**VU**

Leather-like shell without scales, with 7 longitudinal ridges



Head and limbs without scales, night blue in colour speckled with white

Back covered with 7 lines of small white granules.



Sizes  
Hatchling: from 5.1 to 6.8 cm  
Adult: from 1.25 m to 2.43 m



Hatchling

MARINE SPECIES



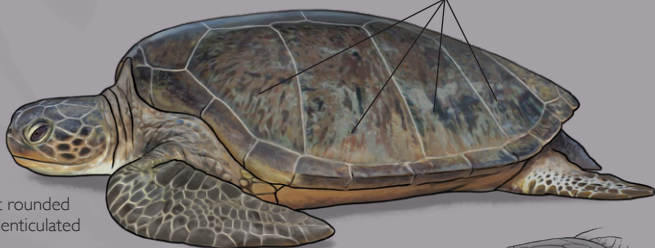
## GREEN SEATURTLE

*Chelonia mydas*

**EN**

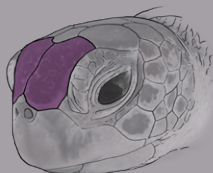
Shell covered with large scales

4 pairs of costal scales



Snout rounded and denticulated beak

Only one pair of prefrontal scales



Sizes  
Hatchling: 2.5 to 5.9 cm  
Adult: from 64 to 153 cm



Hatchling

General coloring black or night blue  
Shell margined with white  
White throat and belly

# SEATURTLES

**MARINE SPECIES**

## HAWKSBILL SEATURTLE

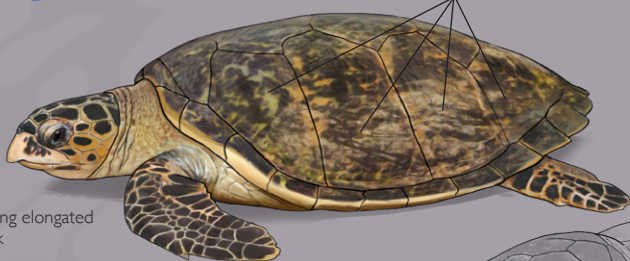
*Eretmochelys imbricata*

**CR**



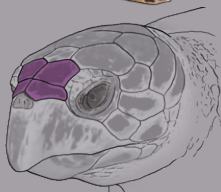
Shell covered with large scales

4 pairs of costal scales



Strong elongated beak

Two pairs of prefrontal scales



Sizes  
Hatchling: 3.2 to 4.6 cm  
Adult: from 51 to 114 cm



General colouring brown to reddish

Dark throat and belly

Hatchling

**MARINE SPECIES**

## LOGGERHEAD SEATURTLE

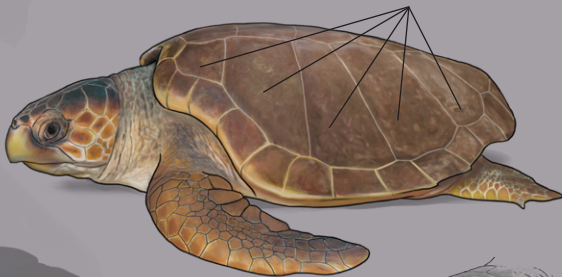
*Caretta caretta*

**VU**



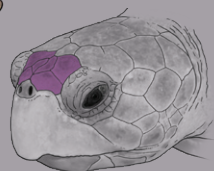
Shell covered with large scales  
Orange-brown to reddish-brown back

5 pairs of costal scales

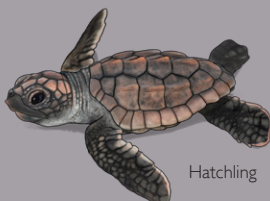


Sizes  
Hatchling: 3.5 to 5.3 cm  
Adult: from 55 to 115 cm

Prefrontals fragmented into more than 4



General colouring brown to reddish



Hatchling

# SEATURTLES

MARINE SPECIES

## OLIVE RIDLEY SEATURTLE

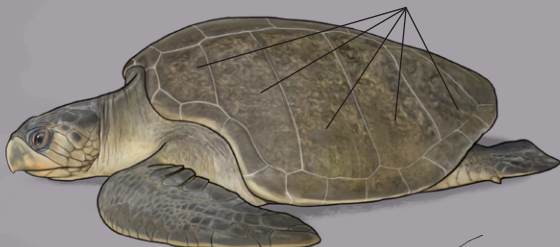
*Lepidochelys olivacea*

**VU**



Shell covered with large scales  
Olive to brown back

5 pairs of costal scales or more, often asymmetrical

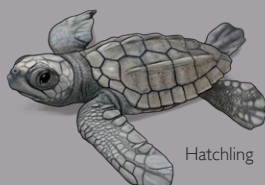


Sizes

Hatchling: from 3,6 to 5 cm

Adult: from 52 to 76 cm

2 pairs of prefrontal scales



Hatchling

General coloring grey to olive  
Shell non marginated with white

DESIGN AND ILLUSTRATIONS: Maël Dewynter

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This guide aims to support citizen science by allowing contributors to properly identify their observations of amphibians and reptiles from Dominica. This field guide will be associated with an article in the magazine HERP me! of the Société Herpétologique de France (SHF) with an illustrated identification key and a presentation of the herpetofauna.



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