

Five-lined Skink

Five-lined Skink (*Eumeces fasciatus*) - Pl.7

Identification: 5" - 8 1/2". Appearance varies with sex and age. The young Five-lined Skink has a black ground color, with five light lines running from head to end of tail; the tail is bright blue. The pattern fades with age. The adult male may have faint stripes on a brown background, or may be solid brown, while the adult female is likely to show more remnants of stripes over a brown background; both sexes have gray or blue tails. During breeding season, the male has red-orange color on the head.

Where to find them: Found in or near wooded areas, in damp habitats with lots of debris for cover, such as rotting logs, boards or rock piles. Mostly found on or near ground, but occasionally climbs trees.

When to find them: Active May through September.

Range: Entire state.

Note: A larger skink with a similar pattern, the Broadhead Skink (*Eumeces laticeps*), is found just over the border in Southeastern Pennsylvania. This is distinguished from the Five-lined Skink by the number of longitudinal rows of scales around the center of the body, and the presence or absence of enlarged postlabial scales (see the Conant and Collins guidebook for details). Five-lined has: 26-30 rows, enlarged postlabial scales. Broadhead has: 30-32 rows, no enlarged postlabial scales. A good, detailed photograph would be essential for verification if you suspect you have a Broadhead.

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Key Features

- Yellow stripes extend from eye along body (may be faded or absent in older individuals).
- Base color of adults brown to black.
- Juveniles: black with brilliant blue tails.



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Excerpt from: "Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of New Jersey"
Order the complete guide at - <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/products.htm>