



Santa Lucia Conservancy – *Keeping it Wild*

Take time in the summer heat to explore The Santa Lucia Preserve's amazing reptile community and their defenses!

The California King Snake has an impressive ability to kill and eat other snakes, including venomous species such as Rattlesnakes. The bite from a venomous snake has little effect on them because of their natural immunity to venom.



Lampropeltis getula californica. Christy Wyckoff, Ph.D

The Western Skink, if attacked by a predator its tail is deliberately detached and wiggles. This way can it escape from its hopefully distracted predator. But don't worry, the tail will grow back!



Plestiodon skiltonianus. Connor Long



Phrynosoma blainvillii. Gary Nafis

The Horned Lizard's main defense is to remain motionless using its cryptic coloring to blend into the background, making it difficult to see. It will crouch down to prevent shadows that make it easier to see, it even changes color to better match its surroundings.



Western Fence Lizards are doing humanity a great service!

In California, western black-legged ticks are the primary carriers of Lyme disease. A protein in the blood of Western Fence Lizards kills the bacterium in these ticks when they attach themselves to a lizard and ingest the lizard's blood. This could explain why Lyme disease is less common in California than it is in areas such as the Northeastern states.

What you can do to help!

- Keep your fallen trees. Lizards love old logs for habitat and shelter from predators.
- Skip the pesticides! Lizards will help keep unwanted pests out of your garden.