

New iridescent lizard species found in Cambodia

February 22 2012



A handout photo released by Conservation International shows a new lizard species at Ratanak Kiri province, some 600 kilometers northeast of Phnom Penh.

A new species of lizard with striking iridescent rainbow skin, a long tail and very short legs has been discovered in the rainforest in northeast Cambodia, conservationists announced Wednesday.

Scientists named the skink *Lygosoma veunsaiensis* to honour the Veun Sai-Siem Pang [Conservation Area](#) in Rattanakiri province where it was found, Conservation International (CI) said in a statement.

The lizard was discovered in 2010 in the remote and little-explored [rainforest](#) area during biological surveys led by Fauna & Flora International (FFI) in partnership with CI, the group said.

"These creatures are difficult to find because they spend so much of their life underground', said Neang Thy, a Cambodian national working for FFI and the first herpetologist to see the new skink.

"Some similar species are known from only a few individuals. We were very lucky to find this one," said Neang Thy.

The new species is unusual because it has very short limbs and a tail that is much longer than its main body. Its skin has a refracting quality to the scales that creates a rainbow-like effect in sunlight, the group said.

The lizard was the third new species in the last two years to be found in Veun Sai, following the discovery of a new type of bat and a gibbon.

(c) 2012 AFP

Citation: New iridescent lizard species found in Cambodia (2012, February 22) retrieved 23 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-02-iridescent-lizard-species-cambodia.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--