

# Two new iguanid lizard species from the Laja Lagoon, Chile

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*Liolaemus scorialis*, one of the newly described iguanian lizards. Credit: Jaime Troncoso-Palacios

A team of Chilean scientists discover two new species of iguanid lizards from the Laja Lagoon, Chile. The two new species are believed to have been long confused with other representatives of the *elongatus-kriegi* lizard complex, until recent morphological analysis diagnosed them as

separate. The study was published in the 500th issue of the open access journal *ZooKeys*.

The new lizards belong to the genus *Liolaemus* which contains a total 245 species to date, all of which are endemic to South America.

This study looks at species of the *elongatus-kriegi* complex from two locations of the Laja Lagoon in Chile. Detailed morphological diagnosis helped the authors to describe two new species: *L. scorialis* and *L. zabalai*.

*L. scorialis* has its name inspired by its specific type locality composed mainly of scoria volcanic rock after which the species was named. This species is endemic to Chile where it occurs only in two localities. The second new species *L. zabalai* was named after Patricio Zabala, collection manager of the "Colección de Flora y Fauna Patricio Sánchez Reyes, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile" (SSUC) due to his support of herpetological research in Chile, and occurs in southern Chile and Argentina.

"In summary, our work describes adds two [new species](#) to the [species](#) rich *elongatus-kriegi* complex of lizards from the vicinity of the Laja Lagoon. Nonetheless, there is certainly still much to discover about the diversity of this group of Patagonian [lizards](#)," explains the lead author of the study Dr. Jaime Troncoso-Palacios, Universidad de Chile.

**More information:** Troncoso-Palacios J, Díaz HA, Esquerré D, Urra FA (2015) Two new species of the *Liolaemus elongatus-kriegi* Complex (Iguania, Liolaemidae) from Andean highlands of Southern Chile. *ZooKeys* 500: 83-109. [DOI: 10.3897/zookeys.500.8725](https://doi.org/10.3897/zookeys.500.8725)

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