

Key to the geckos of the western United States

- | | | |
|--------------------|--|--|
| 1. | a. Head covered with symmetrical plates | not a gecko |
| | b. Head covered with small scales or granules | 2 |
| 2. | a. Ventral scales not granular, skin not translucent | 3 |
| | b. Ventral scales granular, skin translucent | 4 |
| 3. | a. Moveable eyelids, no expanded toe pads | not a gecko |
| | b. Eyes covered by a fixed transparent covering, expanded toe pads, overlapping ventral scales | Common Wall Gecko <i>Tarentola mauritanica</i> |
| <i>mauritanica</i> | | |
| 4. | a. Moveable eyelids, no expanded toe pads | 8 (Banded Geckos) |
| | b. Eyes covered by a fixed transparent covering | 5 |
| 5. | a. Toe tips w/ bilobed pads | Peninsular Leaf-toed Gecko <i>Phyllodactylus nocticolus</i> |
| | b. Toe pads not bilobed | 6 |
| 6. | a. Tail w/ prominent enlarged, keeled scales | Roughtail Gecko <i>Cryptopodion scabrum</i> |
| | b. Tail w/o prominent enlarged, keeled scales | 7 |
| 7. | a. No claw on inner toe, toe pads short, rounded, not extending to the base of the toe | Stump-toed Gecko <i>Gehyra mutilata</i> |
| | b. Claw on inner toe, toe pads extend to the base of the toe | Mediterranean Gecko <i>Hemidactylus turcicus</i> |
| 8. | a. Back has enlarged tubercles scattered among granular scales | 9 |
| | b. Back covered w/ uniform granular scales | 10 |
| 9. | a. Texas | Reticulated Gecko <i>Coleonyx reticulatus</i> |
| | b. Southern California | Barefoot Gecko <i>Coleonyx switaki</i> |
| 10. | a. Males w/six or fewer pre-anal pores, more mottled pattern, less distinct bands | Texas Banded Gecko <i>Coleonyx brevis</i> |
| | b. Males w/seven or more pre-anal pores, more distinctly banded | 11 (Western Banded Gecko <i>Coleonyx variegatus</i>)* |
| 11. | a. Dark body bands are wider than spaces, w/o light centers | Utah Banded Gecko <i>Coleonyx v. utahensis</i> (SW Utah, SE Nevada, NW Arizona)* |
| | b. Dark body bands narrow, w/ light centers | 12 |
| 12. | a. Head w/out spots | San Diego Banded Gecko <i>Coleonyx v. abbotti</i> (SW California)* |
| | b. Head w/ spots | 13 |
| 13. | a. Eight or more pre-anal pores in males | Tucson Banded Gecko <i>Coleonyx v. bogerti</i> (SE Arizona, SW New Mexico)* |
| | b. Seven or less pre-anal pores in males | Desert Banded Gecko <i>Coleonyx v. variegatus</i> (SE California, W Arizona, SW Nevada)* |

* Subspecies are often very difficult to distinguish. Pay close attention to where the lizard was found, check the photos and species accounts closely, and be aware that individual lizards from within the range of one subspecies may have some or all the characteristics of a different subspecies.

Information for this key is largely from Conant et al. 1998, Dixon 1970a,b,c,d, Grismer 1990, 2002, Schleich et al. 1996, Stebbins 2003.