

## Weber's Sailfin Lizard

*Hydrosaurus weberi*



### Physical Characteristics

- They are a thick-bodied lizard with a distinct sail-like fin on their tail. They range in color from green and turquoise to blue and yellow near the tail. They may also have spots or speckling along the body.
- Males will often have larger tail fins than the females, and the females' "sail" is considered to be just a dorsal fringe. Males develop a "knob" on their noses that visually separates them from females, who lack this "knob". During the mating season, the males brighten in color.
- These lizards have long toes on their feet used for swimming and gripping tree branches when they are perched. Each toe has a long claw on the end.

### Size

- Length: 2-3 feet
- Weight: 3 to 5lbs

### Lifespan

- Wild: 10-15 years
- Zoos: 15-20 years

### Behaviors

- Active during the day, the sailfin lizard is a solitary species that will stick to rainforest areas that are close to water. They can be considered semi-arboreal and semi-aquatic because they will both climb trees and swim in the water.
- They pair up during mating season.

### Diets

- Wild: vegetation, fruits, small mammals, lizards, eggs, and anything else they can find for protein
- Zoo: mixed veggies, fruits, and tortoise pellets

### Reproduction

- Females will lay their eggs in burrows that they dig close to the water, strategically ensuring they are high enough not to get flooded.
- They will lay 2-8 eggs per clutch, laying multiple clutches in one breeding season; the eggs take roughly 65 days or two months to hatch.
- Babies are born fairly mature (though they lack the distinct sail), and they can hide and hunt on their own.

### Habitat and Range

- Habitat: They thrive in marshes and rainforests near bodies of water.
- They are endemic to the Islands of Indonesia where there is a limited distribution on the islands of Halmahera, Ternate, and Morotai.



### **Conservation**

- IUCN Status: Vulnerable
- Contributing factors: They are threatened by the illegal pet trade, habitat loss, and being hunted by locals for their meat
- There is evidence that these lizards exist in a protected area of the island of Halmahera called Aketajawe-Lolobata National Park, a national park that is making an effort to protect the habitat of this species and other native species.

### **Classification**

- Kingdom: Animalia
- Phylum: Chordata
- Class: Reptilia
- Order: Squamata
- Family: Agamidae
- Genus: *Hydrosaurus*
- Species: *H. weberi*

### **Interesting Facts**

- These lizards can stay underwater for over an hour, and they are excellent swimmers both above and below the water due to their long, flat tails.
- They have the ability to run on their hind legs, an ability that many large lizards do not have.
- Their genus name, *Hydrosaurus*, means “water lizard”.