

## Green & Brown Anoles

We may take them for granted because we're so used to them, but visitors are frequently curious and fascinated by our two most common small lizards.



### Green Anole

*Anolis carolinensis*

#### APPEARANCE



max. length to 8 inches; solid color; *female*—light stripe down back (*left*); *male*—no stripe

#### DEWLAP

creamy white in Southwest Florida but pink elsewhere

#### COLORATION

bright green to light brown, even colors; green on vegetation or light background; brown on bark or dark background; tend to stay green when temperatures over 70°; in cold weather tend to stay brown

#### LIFESPAN

2–3 years

#### HABITAT

native to North America and West Indies; in West Indies, coexists with Brown Anole by staying in canopies of forests; cold tolerant and found to southern Tennessee

#### BREEDING

mate late spring to early summer; several clutches with 2 eggs each; eggs laid in decaying vegetation higher *in trees*; 60-90 days to hatch

#### ESCAPE

usually flees by running up

#### DIET

mostly insects but other small invertebrates; also will prey upon young Brown Anoles



A Green Anole dines on a honey bee.

### Brown Anole

*Anolis sagrei sagrei*

#### APPEARANCE

max. length to 8.5 inches; *female*—diamond pattern with stripe on back (*right*); *male*—spots/patterns but no diamond-like shapes



#### DEWLAP

bright orange with yellow border

#### COLORATION

brown to very dark brown; varied colors; large males become really dark during territorial displays but quickly fade to dull brown when approached by anything other than another male brown anole

#### LIFESPAN

about 3 years

#### HABITAT

native to West Indies; in West Indies, coexists with Green Anole by living on ground or within a few feet of ground; not cold tolerant and found only in peninsular Florida

#### BREEDING

mate late spring to early summer; several clutches with 2 eggs each; eggs laid in decaying vegetation *on ground*; 60-90 days to hatch

#### ESCAPE

usually flees by running down

#### DIET

mostly insects but other small invertebrates; also will prey upon young Green Anoles

## Anole Factoids

- Anoles belong to the genus *Anolis*, the same family as iguanas. Even though they can rapidly change color, anoles are not in the same family as chameleons, which are native to Africa and Madagascar.
- Three pronunciations are common and acceptable: *uh-no'-lee*, *an'-ole*, or *uh-nole'*.
- Anoles have long toes with claws and adhesive toepads, enabling them to climb up almost any surface.
- Both male and female anoles have dewlaps, but the male's is larger. Dewlaps are used for threats, courtship, and defending territory. Doing "push-ups" is another threat display.
- Mature male anoles may display a crest, called a *roach*, that runs down their backs and is used to impress other males when competing for territory or for females (*below*).



- Anoles shed skin in pieces, like people peeling after a sunburn, rather than all at once like snakes. Anoles recycle (eat) the flakes, a good source of minerals.
- There are over 200 species of anoles found in North and Central America; 11 are found in Florida but only two are regularly found in Corkscrew (so far).
- Anoles do not change color for camouflage but because of temperature or as a form of communication; for Green Anoles, *green is keen and brown is down* – when two males fight, the winner turns bright green while the loser turns brown
- Green and Brown Anoles are not natural enemies; until the 1970's, Greens were the only anoles in Southwest Florida and expanded to ground habitats; with the introduction of Browns, they are returning to their natural canopy habitat