

# The Mexican alligator lizard

By Solomon Turner  
Contributor

According to the Smithsonian's National Zoo & Conservation Biology Institute and the "Reptiles Magazine" website frequented by reptile pet owners, the Alligator Lizard, or *Abrinia graminea*, lives in the Mexican states of Veracruz and Puebla as well as in some high elevation forests of Guatemala.

These lizards generally grow to about 10 inches in length and have unique coloration ranging from blue teal to deep green. They have yellow underbellies and distinct yellow rings around each eye. While there isn't a distinct sexual dimorphism within the species, the males of this species tend to be brighter in color while the females have lateral stripes and are paler in color.

They have viviparous reproduction which means they have live birth and do not lay eggs. After their first year they are sexually

mature and will have one litter of seven to 14 offspring each year. They actively breed from July to November and may stay locked together, or copulated, for up to 24 hours.

Their gestation period is six to eight months and in captivity the males will potentially eat the offspring. Before giving birth, the female will develop chalky white deposits on the sides of her jaw mainly as a calcium deposit.

Their limited habitat range consists of the high elevation cloud forests of Mexico and Guatemala at about 4,000 to 8,000 feet in elevation. These arboreal lizards live their lives in the forest canopy among the dense vegetation and bromeliads characteristic of cloud forests. Due to their canopy lifestyle they have prehensile tails which allow them to maneuver through their environment with ease.

As a result of their limited habitat, conservation efforts are needed in order to ensure their survival due to the increasing

pressure and deforestation occurring for agricultural land.

The pet industry is also a threat towards these rare arboreal gems due to their vibrant coloration and they can be found in many reptile expos across the world. While it is not illegal to have them as pets it is the responsibility of a potential buyer to ensure that the lizard is sourced from an experienced breeder and not harvested from the wild. Due to habitat destruction and the pet industry they, along with portions of the rangeland, have been given protection under Mexican law.

According to "Reptiles Magazine," a local misconception of these lizards is that they are poisonous which is attributed to their coloration and aggressive tendency to bite. Due to this misconception the native people tend to kill these lizards on sight and refer to them as "escorpion de arbol" which means "tree scorpion" in Spanish.

## 'Purpose under pressure'

By Amber Vance  
Staff Writer

"Purpose Under Pressure" was a motivational speaking event that was sponsored by Brevard College Athletics and Campus Life. The event was held at the Porter Center at 9 p.m. last Wednesday night.

The guest speaker was Yannick McKie, founder of the McKie Foundation. McKie began his presentation by saying he was filming for a documentary and his speech would be recorded.

McKie started the foundation to help at risk youth and to assist young people like him who had lost their parents. McKie explained that he had lost both parents before the age of fifteen and he turned down a negative path that led him to federal prison.

He explained he made negative choices to deal with problems, but, to be truly successful, you need mental toughness, the ability to push through pressure and change the way you think to reach your purpose. "You need to determine what you want to accomplish (purpose) and why you are doing it (passion)," McKie said. Passion helps you to push through pain and obstacles to achieve your purpose.

McKie told the audience to form many different types of goals for different areas such as finances, education, spirituality and familial goals. "Once a goal is achieved, your future becomes more clear," McKie said.

McKie referred to an interview with Muhammad Ali in which the interviewer asked him how many sit-ups he did in training and his response was that he did not count the sit-ups until it started hurting. "Sometimes things have to get hard and the hurt is what will help you," said McKie. "Just because things didn't work out does not mean you won't achieve your purpose. Remember if you have a negative perspective it will lead to negative feelings that lead to negative behaviors."

Before McKie ended his presentation, he instructed the audience to ask themselves, "What is distracting me from maximizing my potential and reaching my goals?" Then he concluded by summarizing the points in his speech as he said, "The key to success is having purpose, passion, a positive perspective, being aware of the kinds of people around you and being prepared. Be careful of who you surround yourself with, they will determine your habits."

When he was finished, McKie announced that everyone in the audience was welcome to have pizza in Tornado Alley. This event was a successful one not just for the refreshments but for the motivating speech given by McKie that everyone can use in their life.

## New printers!

Over the course of Winter Break, the IT Department for Brevard College was busy at work with its latest installment: new printers in several areas around campus.

This process began with the changing to a locally-based printer vendor, Sharp, in order to control cost, improve the quality of equipment and service and expand access to more people in the campus community.

Changes from the old way of printing on campus include the ability to print from anywhere to anywhere there is a viable printing device, print jobs not being released until you activate that option at the physical device and options for color printing.

To print, one must simply tap their ID card on the device or type in their ID number (making sure not to include any zeros preceding the ID number) and releasing the print job by following the instructions displayed on the screen.

Students should note that, with the expansion of printers to residence halls, personal printers are no longer allowed in the residence halls. Faculty and staff will also no longer be allowed to lease any individual desktop printers due to high costs for that particular service.

Students, faculty, and staff can learn more information about the new printing setup on their [brevard.edu](http://brevard.edu) email or by contacting the IT HelpDesk at [help@brevard.edu](mailto:help@brevard.edu) or 828-884-8303.

— Julie Carter