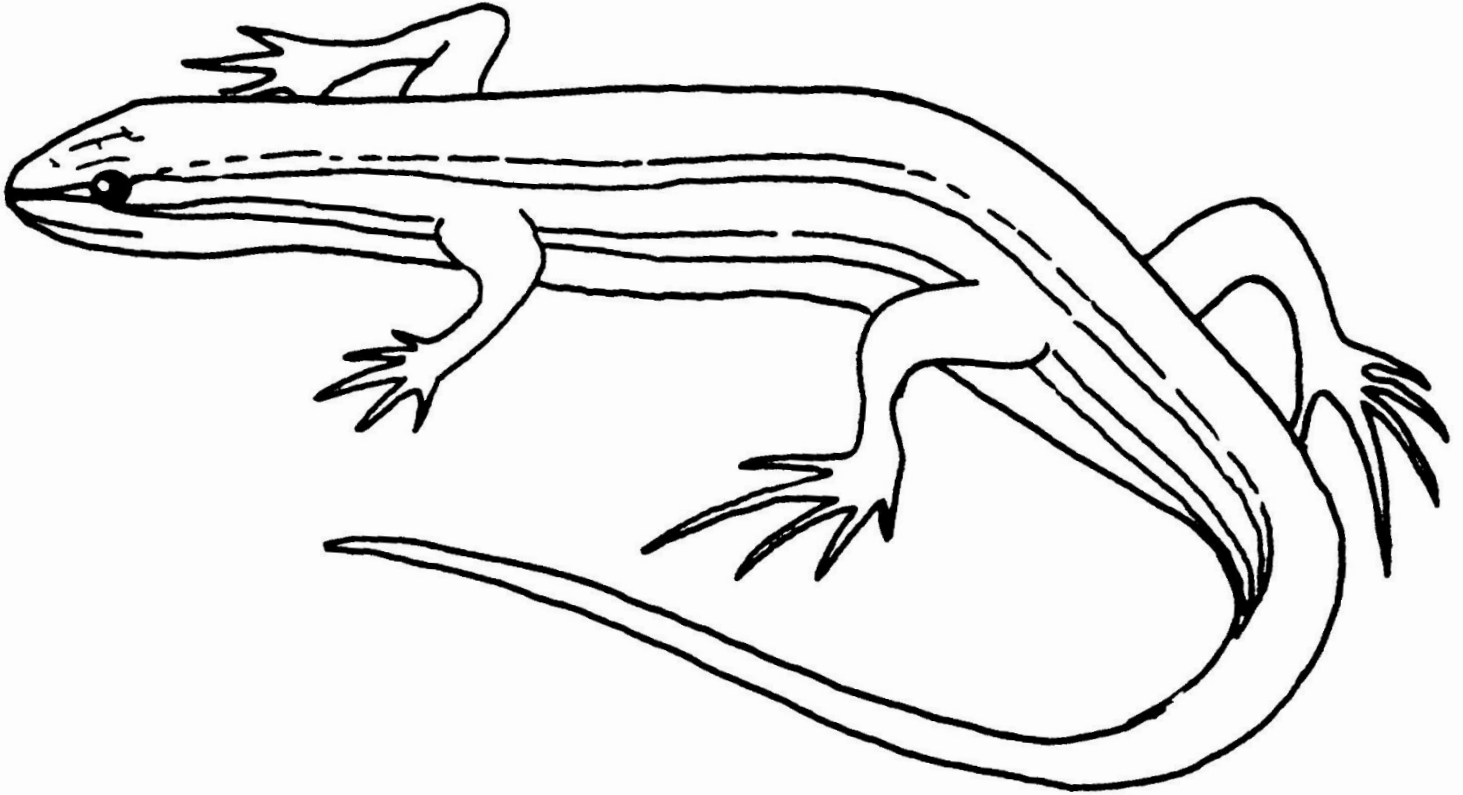




PA's Amphibian and Reptile Coloring Series

# Northern Coal Skink



*All About Me: Greetings! I am a Northern Coal Skink. We are members of a single, very large family of skinks, and we are difficult to distinguish from others of our genus. We do most of our foraging during daylight hours, just like other skinks. We range from five to seven inches long. Our bodies are brown in color. We have two pairs of light stripes, each enclosing a dark band, extend from our necks onto the tail. We have no light lines on our heads, which helps distinguish us from the two others found in the state. Males may have a reddish head. Our young have a blue tail, but otherwise are marked identically to parents. In Pennsylvania, we are known from the northcentral, a portion of the northwest, and one southwestern county. Its population is scattered and does not occur in large numbers anywhere in its range. We prefer damp, moist woods, especially those with leaf piles or loose stones. We enjoy freshwater springs with their welcome supply of cool water. Even so, we often occupy drier, more rocky open areas. When frightened, we quickly dive into water where we find shelter beneath a convenient rock. We hunt under leaf piles and small stones for a variety of insects to eat.*