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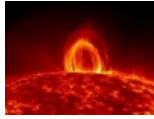
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Lizard Species Face Mass Extinction Due to Climate Change

By [Sam Goodwin](#) | Mar 07, 2013 10:52 AM EST



(Photo : Reuters) Lizard species face mass extinction due to climate change.

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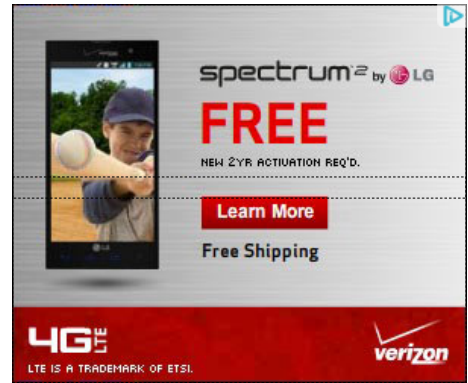
According to researchers, many species of lizards are facing mass extinction due dramatic climate changes taking place globally


A new study that was published March 6 suggests that dozens of lizard species, especially with viviparous reproduction, could become extinct in the next fifty years due to the increase in global temperature.

The study states that the evolution of this mode of reproduction, which is thought to be a key successful adaptation, could be the reason for the species' extinction. Researchers studied the hypothesis that historical invasions of cold climates by Liolaemus lizards have only been possible due to their evolution to viviparity from oviparity.

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Dr. Daniel Pincheira-Donoso is one of the few people in the world who works on the ecology and evolution of these lizard



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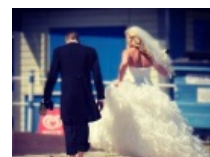
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species. He said: "Lizards' reproduction is largely linked to climatic temperatures and viviparous species are usually found in cold environments. When reptiles initially moved to colder areas they needed to evolve emergency measures to succeed in these harsh places, and we believe viviparity is one of these key measures.

However, this transition is mostly one-directional and unlikely to be reversed. Rapid changes in the environment's temperature would demand rapid re-adaptations to secure the species' survival. Through the research we found that over the next 50 years nearly half of the area where these species occur may disappear, causing multiple extinctions due to climate change."

The authors of the study concluded that though this viviparity has helped lizards reproduce and adapt to cold climates in the past, it could be the reason for the species' extinction now.

"These lizards are one of the most diverse groups of animals, and are able to adapt to remarkably diverse conditions," Dr. Pincheira-Donoso. "Unfortunately, a reduction in cold environments will reduce their areas of existence, which means that their successful evolutionary history may turn into a double-edged sword of adaptation. Their extinctions would be an atrocious loss to biodiversity."

The findings of the study were published in the scientific journal *Global Ecology and Biogeography*.



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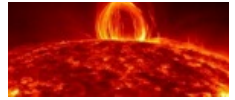
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