

Brown Anole in Hawai'i



By Kumu Cariaga

Kilo. What do you notice? What do you wonder? What are some predictions you have?



Habitat:

- *Originally from Cuba and the Bahamas
- *active during the day in warm weather
- *often bask in vegetation (plants)
- *during cool weather, may be found hiding under tree bark or under rotten logs

Introduced to Hawai'i:

- *may have hitched a ride on plants brought in to Hawai'i
- or as someone's pet
- *highly invasive - brown anole outcompete and consume many native species
- *enjoy Hawai'i's climate (similar to home)

Physical Appearance:

- *light brown color with darker brown to black markings on its back
- *whitish/yellowish patterns on its back
- *tan to light lines on its side
- *can change color from darker brown to black
- *a female has a light line that runs down its back

Size:

- *Males: 7 - 8 inches long
- *Females: 3 - 6 inches long

Shedding:

- *molt skin in small pieces
- *may eat molted skin to restore calcium in its body



Dewlap:

- *located on the brown anole's throat
- *made of loose expandable skin
- *looks like an orange or red throat fan with white edges
- *a male anole will often extend its dewlap to attract a mate or make himself appear larger against his enemies.



A male brown anole displaying dewlap in gardenia bush.

Diet:

- *crickets
- *moths
- *ants
- *cockroaches
- *grasshoppers
- *spiders
- *slugs
- *snails
- *other lizards
- *lizard eggs
- *young of green anole
- *their own molted skin and detached tails
- *small fish
- *basically...anything that can fit in its mouth!



Lifecycle:

- *lifespan 4 -5 years
- *reproduces in summer months (depending on climate)
- *female lays 1 - 2 eggs every 7 - 14 days
- *female lays eggs in moist soil or rotten wood
- *female buries then abandons the eggs
- *eggs hatch about 7 weeks later
- *hatchlings that survive do so by instinct



Predation:

- *can detach most of its tail when pursued or captured
- *the detached tail piece will continue to move - possibly distracting the predator - allowing the brown anole to escape
- *tail will partially regrow
- *if provoked or threatened, may bite, urinate (pee), or defecate (poop)
- *may hiss if caught, injured, or while fighting
- *predators: rats, snakes, birds, cats





Toepads are found on the underside of the fingers and toes and are made of enlarged scales. Toepads help brown anoles cling to smooth surfaces like leaves and walls.

Can you see the brown anole?

