

Lizard lounge

Creating space for garden guardians

Skinks, geckos and lizards, including the iconic Blue-tongued Lizard, are regular visitors to many gardens, but their populations are in decline in urban areas due to the lack of lizard friendly habitats. By chomping snails and slugs, reptiles are fantastic garden guardians, and by creating a simple lizard lounge in your own garden you can provide habitat and protection for these precious creatures.

Location for a lizard lounge

It's time to think like a lizard! Have a look around your garden – lizards need protection from predators, like large birds, cats and dogs, and somewhere out of the weather to have a nap. Positioned where they won't get too wet when it rains, broken terracotta pots, hollow logs, stones and rocks can all be transformed into a happy home for these radical reptiles.

Fun in the sun

Being cold blooded, lizards rely on the warmth of the sun to heat up before setting out to forage for the day. Placing a larger, flat rock or even an old slate tile in a nice sunny spot near their shelter is the perfect place for a bit of sunbathing!



Delightful day spa

Self-care is important for all of us, including reptiles!

Placing a shallow bowl of water or two throughout the garden will help thirsty lizards. Leaving some rough bark (even bark mulches), small branches or rocks around will allow the lizards to exfoliate their skin as they shed throughout the year – talk about a pampering!

Pop in some plants

No lizard lounge is complete without the right plants, which will be used for shelter and tucker. Dense bushes like Grevilleas and Bottlebrushes throughout the garden will encourage insects for the lizards to snack on and give them places to hide. Native plants that produce berries, like Muntries (*Kunzea pomifera*) and Currant Bush (*Coprosma quadriida*) provide reptiles with a sweet treat, as do Flax-lilies or Dianellas, whose deep blue berries are a favourite of Blue-tongues (this is where our Dianella Microforest gets its name)!

Groundcovers are also important, allowing the lizards space to hide. We have used Creeping Boobialla (*Myoporum parvifolium*), Kidney Weed (*Dichondra repens*) and Native Sarsaparilla (*Hardenbergia violacea*) in the Microforest, but to find out what's best for your place, head to your local nursery and find out which indigenous plants your lizards will love.



Can the chemicals

To keep urban reptiles healthy and happy in their habitat, it's best to avoid using snail pellets, herbicides, pesticides and non-organic fertilisers in the garden – contact with some of these products can make lizards really crook, and it may even kill them. Remember, lizards, skinks and geckos are garden guardians and will happily manage your pest problems for you!

