

Lizard code of care

Find out how to go lizard spotting without causing harm

It's against the law to handle lizards without a permit.

Do use a pair of binoculars to look for skinks on rocks and berry-covered bushes. Sit quietly a few metres away and see if you can spot them basking and eating. During summer, the best time to do this can be early or later in the day when it is not too hot or too cold.

Do look for lizards after dark. Most of our local geckos are nocturnal and it is possible to see them by going spotlighting with a torch at night.

Don't lift rocks – it disturbs lizard and invertebrate habitat and can destroy their important refuge spots. Lizards can die if squashed by a rock being placed down on top of them.

Don't hold lizards – it's very stressful to them and can cause them to lose their tail. Losing a tail can reduce a lizard's chance of survival because it's an important fat store. Also the bone in the tail is unable to grow back. Our lizards can also carry diseases such as salmonella which makes holding them risky for humans.

Source: NZ Department of Conservation

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