

A.R.T. News

LIZARDS

All lizards are carnivores, feeding primarily on insects and other small bits of meat they find, such as worms.

Some larger species are capable of tackling even rodents or small snakes, but for our backyards they help us out by consuming many of the insects we prefer not to deal with. Without a doubt lizards fit any description of beneficial, and with the exception of the two venomous kinds found only in our southwest deserts they are nearly completely harmless. If a lizard clamps down on your finger with their strong jaws, it will not feel so hot, but there is no venom involved and they would do this only in response to a threat to them.

One of the most noticed lizards is geckos. These amazing little animals can be seen running all over the walls inside homes or businesses, particularly at night, and rapidly gulping down any insects they find on the walls or ceilings. They are common in tropical areas such as Hawaii or Florida but many different kinds of very colorful species can be found across the United States in the southern states. Again these are harmless animals that provide great benefit, but they also can be a bit of a nuisance. These lizards also make a distinctive “clicking” or peeping sound that may be a bit annoying when you are trying to get to sleep.

You will not find any pesticides available for lizard control. To keep lizards out of our homes this can be done without any chemicals. The benefits of these predators are just too great for our outdoor landscaping and gardens. We should encourage them to be there. Since the lizard really can't earn a living inside out homes - there just isn't enough “buggy” food there to support them - the only reason they would normally enter would be to hide.

The proper management program for keeping lizards out of the home involves the practice of “exclusion”.

A properly sealed home is the key to several goals, including maintaining heat in the winter and cool air in the summer. Sealing the gaps around doors and windows, and any other openings that lead from the outside to the inside, helps to accomplish this energy conservation. It also helps keep critters from finding their way inside the home, including into the attic or in the crawl space below your home. You want to keep bugs out of the wall void spaces too, because from there they'll easily find a way to enter the living areas through electrical outlets, vents, etc. By permanently closing off openings to your home you'll keep out bugs, bats, birds, rodents, snakes, lizards and pretty much every but the family, kids, cats and dogs.