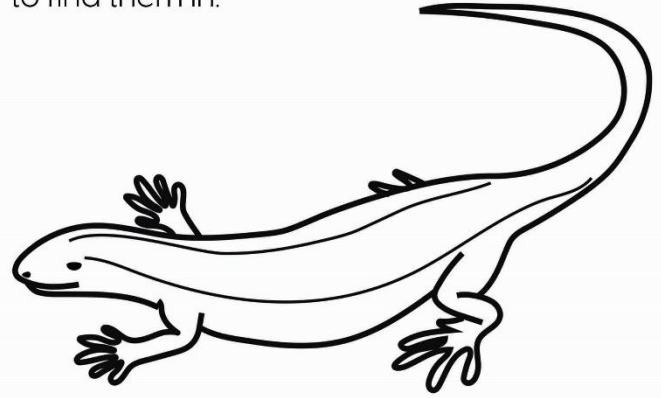


# Tips for spotting Common Lizards

Lizards like to live where they can safely feed, bask in the sun, and hibernate over winter. For these reasons you are more likely to find them in:

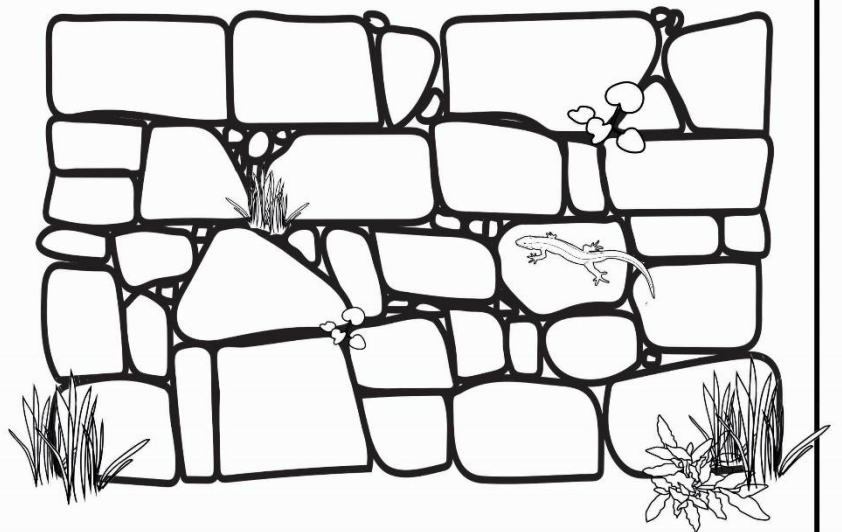
- South facing banks or old stone walls
- Vegetated sand dunes
- Dry sections of bogs
- Upland heath
- Old stone ruins



It is rare to see lizards out in the open. You are more likely to see them close to cover - where they can easily retreat if danger appears. Look along the edge of vegetation changes, such as where heather gives way to a trail or the edges of sections of marram grass on sand dunes.

If there is some vegetation on a bank or old stone wall, look for sunny spots, such as a patch of bare soil. There might be lizards hiding in the grass, but these sunny spots are easier places to see them.

Check for them on stones or fallen fences posts. These are ideal spots for them to crawl out of the vegetation and bask in the sun to warm up.



# Tips for spotting Common Lizards

- You may find somewhere that looks perfect for lizards, but you can't find any. Check on the area in winter – if it gets water logged then it might not be suitable for lizards to hibernate so it's unlikely you'll find any living there.
- Habitats that have been badly disturbed are unlikely to have lizards. Eg. regular digging, pollution or pesticide use.
- If you see a lizard and it runs off, wait. Be patient. Chances are it will come back to that same spot to continue basking.
- Keep your distance. If you see a lizard and rush in for a closer look, it will probably run away.
- Be aware of your shadow. If you see a lizard, try to avoid your shadow passing over it. The lizard might think that you are a flying predator so it will hide.
- In July, pregnant females spend more time in the sun to help their babies grow internally. This is a good time to see them but also a very important time not to disturb them.
- Don't stay too long. The time a lizard spends on figuring out if you are trying to eat it, is time lost doing what lizards need to do – hunt, control their body temperature, mate, etc.
- And of course, lizards hibernate over winter so your chances of seeing one from October – February are slim. However, they occasionally emerge on warm or sunny days so it's always worth having a look!

**Please remember it is illegal to handle common lizards without a license.**

**Only do so if a lizard is in danger, such as you are rescuing one from a cat or you find one indoors. Never try to catch a lizard by its tail!**



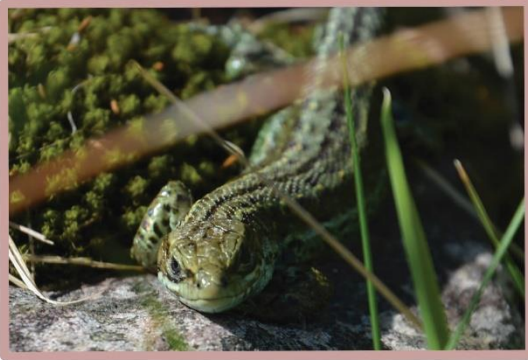
# Common Lizard

Latin Name: *Zootoca vivipara*  
Irish Name: Laghairt choiteann

## Is it a lizard or a newt?

When out and about looking for our **common lizards**, there is one other little animal that you might find. It's an animal that is often mistaken for a lizard – the **smooth newt**. Here are some tips for helping you distinguish between the two.

### Common Lizard!



- **Lizards** are reptiles and have scaled skin.
- Adult lizards are around 14cm long.
- Lizards have 5 toes on all 4 feet.
- Lizards can move quickly on land.

- **Lizards** bask in the sun to warm up, find them in south facing areas.
- Lizards need the daytime sun to be active.
- Lizards have fully formed live young.

- **Lizards** can be brown, green, olive or black.
- Baby lizards are dark bronze.
- Male lizards have a bulge where their body meets their tail.

### Newt!



- **Newts** are amphibians and have smooth skin.
- Adult newts are around 10cm long.
- Newts have only 4 toes on their front feet.
- Newts move slowly on land.

- **Female Newts** are plain, light brown – often with a thin black line along their spine.
- Male newts have spots and a long crest along their spine during mating season.

- **Newts** spend the mating season (Spring) in ponds.
- Newts prefer damp areas such as woodlands or bogs
- Newts produce eggs which hatch into efts.

Please remember it is illegal to handle common lizards without a license. Only do so if a lizard is in danger, such as you are rescuing one from a cat or you find one indoors. Never try to catch a lizard by its tail!

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