

# Eastern Blue-Tongue.

*Tiliqua scincoides*

**Lifespan:** 15-20 years

**Size:** 40-60cm

**Enclosure:** Minimum 120 x 45 x 60cm

**Diet:** Live food, fruits, vegetables and pellets

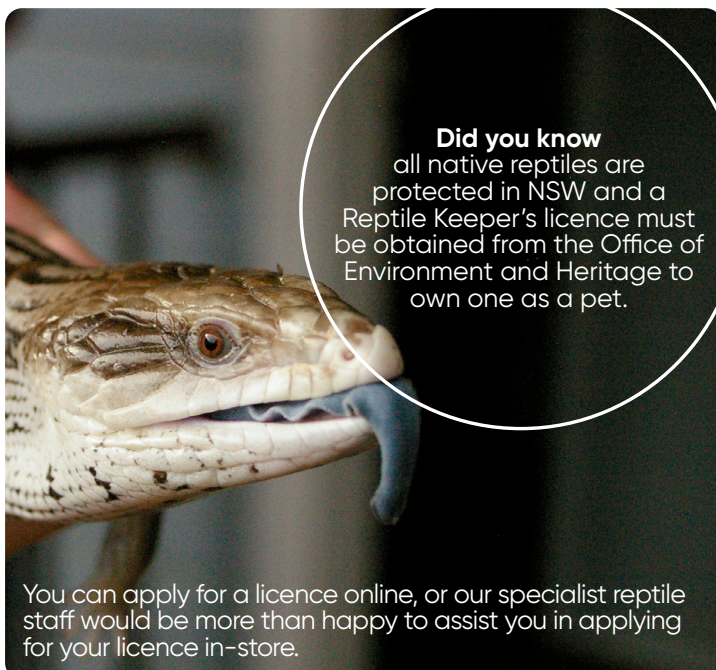
**Care Level:** Intermediate

## Enclosure.

Blue-tongues are active, diurnal reptiles that spend considerable time basking and foraging for food during the day. Blue-tongues are solitary animals and should generally be housed on their own. Having more than one blue-tongue in an enclosure may lead to dominance and aggression issues.

For one adult blue-tongued lizard a glass or timber enclosure of at least 120 x 45 x 60cm enclosure is required. It is important that the enclosure has sufficient ventilation as well as a secure, lockable door.

The enclosure can be furnished with low basking logs (blue-tongues are not great climbers) or rocks, a background, artificial plants, a water bowl and a feed dish. An absorbent substrate is also important such as coconut fibre.



**Did you know**  
all native reptiles are protected in NSW and a Reptile Keeper's licence must be obtained from the Office of Environment and Heritage to own one as a pet.

You can apply for a licence online, or our specialist reptile staff would be more than happy to assist you in applying for your licence in-store.



## Maintenance.

Blue-tongue lizards have a very specific set of requirements in regards to general care, however if all of these elements are provided they thrive in captivity.

Providing adequate temperature gradients within a blue-tongue's enclosure is essential for their health and wellbeing. Blue-tongues require a basking spot maintained between 34-36°C. They should have access to an elevated piece of flat timber or rock ornament to allow them to bask closer to the heat source. The cool end of the enclosure should be maintained between 24-26°C and should not drop below 15-18°C at night.

Temperatures should be checked daily and must be regulated with the use of a good quality thermostat. Recommended sources of heat include the use of incandescent, halogen and carbon fibre (night time) globes along with a heat mat as a secondary source of heating.

Ultraviolet light (UV) plays an important role in a blue-tongues growth and development. A 5.0 UVB tube or compact globe must be used as a source of artificial UV lighting in the blue-tongue's enclosure. Blue tongue's should also have access to unfiltered, natural light at least once or twice a week. They also require a 'day and night' cycle with heat lights running for approximately 10-12 hours and UV lights for 4-6 hours each day.

It is important to maintain high standards of cleanliness and hygiene within the blue tongue's enclosure. Daily 'spot checks' should be carried out cleaning substrate to remove any faeces, shed skin or uneaten food. A full substrate change should be carried out every six to eight weeks (depending on what substrate is used) and the enclosure thoroughly cleaned with a reptile-safe disinfectant.

## Diet.

Blue-tongue lizards are omnivores and feed on a range of live insects and plant matter.

In captivity, blue-tongues should be fed a variety of both live foods and fresh fruits and vegetables (50:50). Live foods include; snails, crickets, woodies, mealworms (in moderation) and silkworms.

All live foods should be dusted 2-3 times a week with a calcium and multivitamin powder before being offered to the blue-tongue. Blue-tongues are relatively slow-moving and may have trouble catching faster insects such as crickets and woodies.

Blue-tongues can also be fed small amounts of tinned dog food (beef or chicken) with added calcium powder as well as boiled egg. Fruits and vegetables that can be offered include apple, pear, melons, pitted stone fruits, berries, banana, squash, carrot, endive and kale.

Commercially available lizard pellets can also be mixed through the chopped fruits and vegetables to provide extra nutrition to the lizard. Juvenile

blue-tongues should be fed daily and adults can be offered food every second or third day.

Fresh water should be available to the lizard at all times and changed daily.



Pictured: an albino blue-tongue and a hypermelanistic blue-tongue.

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## Common Health Issues.

**Intestinal Parasites (worms):** Blue-tongues are susceptible to worms. Faecal checks and worming can be carried out by an experienced reptile veterinarian.

**Dysecdysis (Abnormal Shedding):** Low humidity levels can sometimes result in a blue-tongue having an 'incomplete' shed.

**Metabolic Bone Disease (MBD):** Calcium or vitamin D3 deficiency as a result of incorrect diet and/or lack of or incorrect UV lighting.

### Red Flags.

If you notice any of the following symptoms, please contact your vet.

- Loss of appetite • Diarrhoea • Lethargy • Retained skin around toes or tail tip • Abnormal movements
- Disorientation • Twitching/tremors

## Essentials.

Products required to care for your blue-tongue:

Enclosure (min. 120 x 45 x 60cm)  
Water bowl  
Feed dish  
Flat basking log or rock  
Substrate  
Hide  
Background

Artificial plants  
Heat fitting and globe  
UV fitting and globe  
Thermostat  
Heat mat  
Thermometer  
Timer

Reptile disinfectant  
Live food  
Tinned dog food  
Calcium and multivitamin powder  
Lizard pellets  
Fruit and vegetables



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