

Why do lizards do push-ups?

Scientists believe that there are several reasons why a lizard will do push ups.

The first is that male lizards are displaying for other lizards. Fence lizards (the common blue belly found in and around Foothills Park) are probably showing off their bright blue bellies.

They want other male lizards to know they have claimed a specific area as their own and not to come into their territory. When other male lizards see it they think “that guy is really big and important, don’t mess with him.”

They want female lizards to know they have claimed a specific area as their own and that they will be safe there. When female lizards see the blue belly they think “that guy is really big and important, he will make a really good mate.”

A lizard’s eyesight is not as good as yours or mine. By raising their heads up and down they can see farther. Our eyes are on the front of our heads, we are very good at determining how far away an object is; lizards eyes are on the sides of their heads the probably can not determine distance very well; by raising up and down they may be getting a different view of things around them helping them to determine where things are.

I suppose there is the possibility that the male lizards just want to good upper body strength and do push ups to stay buff...