



Horned Lizard

Order: Salientia **Family:** Iguanid

SIZE: Length, 2 ½ - 7 inches.

DESCRIPTION: Broad, flat body with crown of spines on head. Spiny projections flank body. Light brown to grayish in color, with patterns of darker coloration on their backs for camouflage. Forefeet have five clawed toes. Sometimes referred to as "horny toads."

LOCOMOTION: Awkward gait. Broad, flat body limits their speed and makes it difficult to travel through dense underbrush.

HABITS: Lives in areas of sandy or gravelly soil with low vegetation. Sometimes found near ant colonies. Diurnal. Males are territorial. Hibernate in the colder winter months and survive entirely on fat reserves. Basks in the sun in the morning and in the heat of the afternoon will burrow itself into cooler soil or find shade under a bush. When threatened, the lizard does not run away. Instead, it freezes and relies on its camouflage. With its horns, it can flare its body, so it will not fit easily into a snake's mouth. Horns and scales make them difficult to swallow. In other instances, when molested, some species can squirt blood from the corners of their eyes, effectively repelling some enemies.

DIET: Primarily ants. Also eats other insects such as beetles, flies, spiders, and grasshoppers.

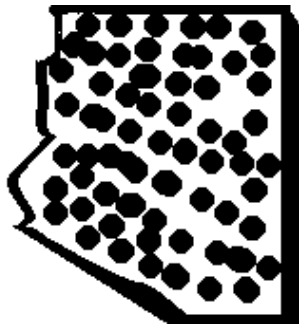
RANGE: Different species are found from the west coast through the Midwest and south to Mexico.

ENEMIES: Hawks and other predatory birds, roadrunners and other lizards.

FAMILY LIFE: Lays eggs in an underground nest. Two to forty eggs are laid depending on the species. Female digs a small chamber 6-8 inches below the ground and buries the eggs. She may remain at this site overnight, but soon leaves never to know the fate of her young. One species, the Short-horned lizard gives birth to live young.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

- By burrowing underground during the heat of the day, horned lizards help reduce water loss through evaporation.
- Similar to toads, they flick out their tongues to pick up insects.
- There are 13 species of horned lizards, 7 of which occur in the United States.
- One horned lizard may consume 70-100 ants in one day.
- They can live up to 8 years in the wild.



Range

Different species of the horned lizard are found throughout most of Arizona.