



## Scorpion

**Order:** Scorpionida

**SIZE:** Range in size from less than ¼ inch to 9 inches in length.

**DESCRIPTION:** Hard exoskeleton. Cold blooded. Four pairs of walking legs and one pair of pedipalps or pincers for the capture and holding of prey items. Long, upcurved tail ends in a poisonous stinger used for prey capture and defense. Most species of scorpions produce a bee-like sting reaction in humans which is painful but not life threatening. They have several pairs of structurally simple eyes. Utilize sensory hairs and mechanoreceptors to locate prey by detecting vibrations, air movement and chemical stimuli.

**HABITS:** Found in desert environments, as well as moist, tropical regions. Well suited for survival in desert conditions; they can go for prolonged periods with little or no food. Unsociable and often exhibit cannibalistic behavior. Nocturnal hunters, that usually hide or burrow during daylight.

**DIET:** Primarily prey on smaller invertebrates, and sometimes lizards, mice, and snakes. Prey items are torn apart by mouth parts called chelicera. Enzymes liquefy the digestible portions and the non-digestible portions are discarded as a small pellet.

**RANGE:** Scorpions can be found on every major landmass, except Antarctica.

**FAMILY LIFE:** Male performs a courtship dance during which he deposits a packet of sperm and leads the female over it where she picks it up with her genital opening. After mating, the female may kill and eat the male. Depending on the species, gestation may last from 6 weeks to 1 ½ years. The female bears 2 to 62 live

young and carries them on her back for 2 weeks, after which they disperse to lead solitary lives. Scorpions take as long as 5 years to reach adulthood.

**ENEMIES:** Birds, bats, rodents, and reptiles.

### **DID YOU KNOW THAT...?**

- There are about 1500 living species of scorpions, and 25 of these are capable of causing death in humans.
- On average, they live from 2-10 years, but certain species may live to 25 years of age.
- Arizona is home to one of the largest species of scorpion in the United States; the desert hairy scorpion and to the most toxic scorpion in the United States; the bark scorpion.
- All scorpions fluoresce a brilliant greenish-yellow.
- Scorpions are the oldest known terrestrial arthropods.
- Fossil records indicate that prehistoric scorpions reached lengths in excess of three feet.



## Range

The scorpion is found  
in most desert areas in Arizona.