

PERENTIE

Varanus giganteus



FACTS AT A GLANCE

TYPE OF ANIMAL

Varanidae

OTHER NAMES

Monitor Lizard
Goanna

FOUND WHERE

South Australia
Western Australia
Queensland & Northern Territory

LENGTH

2.5m

WEIGHT

Up to 15kg

CONSERVATION STATUS

Least concern

LIFE SPAN

Around 40 years in the wild
Up to 30 years in captivity

The Perentie is the largest monitor in Australia and found in arid to semi-arid regions with hard-packed soil, loose stones, rocky outcrops and gorges.

Although mainly terrestrial, they can climb trees, especially if feeling threatened.

DIET

Being carnivorous, perenties eat eggs, carrion, birds, mammals and other reptiles. They have also been known to eat other smaller perenties. Even though they have sharp teeth, they swallow their food whole. Recent research suggests that monitors have the evolutionary remains of a venom gland, which may explain why wounds from the bites of these animals take a long time to heal.



REPRODUCTION

As territorial animals, perenties fight over access to females. Once the fight is won, the male will approach the female and nuzzle her to show he is interested. Using a termite nest, the female perentie will lay from 6 to 12 eggs per year. These take around 220 days to hatch.

FUN FACTS

Perenties can run up to 40km/h.

Perenties have rear-facing teeth which are used to grip onto their food rather than chew it!

Perenties will often display a "tripodding" behaviour, where they stand up on their hind feet and stand tall, looking for threats.