

Horned lizard

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Horned lizards are a genus (*Phrynosoma*) of lizards which are the type genus of the family Phrynosomatidae. The horned lizard is popularly called a "**horned toad**", "**horny toad**", or "**horned frog**", but it is neither a toad nor a frog. The popular names come from the lizard's rounded body and blunt snout, which make it resemble a toad or frog.

(*Phrynosoma* literally means "toad-bodied".) The spines on its back and sides are made from modified scales, whereas the horns on the heads are true horns (i.e. they have a bony core). Of 15 species of horned lizards in North America, eight are native to the United States. The largest-bodied and most widely distributed of the US species is the Texas horned lizard (*P. cornutum*).

Contents

- 1 Description
 - 1.1 Protection against predation
- 2 Species and subspecies
- 3 Symbol
- 4 Notes
- 5 External links

Description

Horned lizards are morphologically similar to the Australian thorny devil (*Moloch horridus*), but are only distantly related. They also have other similarities, such as being sit-and-wait predators and preying upon ants, so the two species are considered a great example of convergent evolution.

Protection against predation

Horned lizards use a wide variety of means to avoid predation. Their coloration generally serves as camouflage. When threatened, their first defense is to remain still to avoid detection. If approached too closely, they generally run in short bursts and stop abruptly to confuse the predator's visual acuity. If this fails, they puff up their bodies to cause them to appear more horned and larger, so more difficult to swallow. At least four species are also able to squirt an aimed stream of blood (see Autohaemorrhaging) from the corners of the eyes for a distance of up to five feet.^{[1][2][3]} They do this by restricting the blood flow leaving the head, thereby increasing blood pressure and rupturing tiny vessels around the eyelids. This not only confuses predators, but also the blood tastes foul to canine and feline predators. It appears to have no effect against predatory birds. To avoid being picked up by the head or neck, a horned lizard ducks or elevates its head and orients its cranial horns straight up, or back. If a predator tries to take it by the body, the lizard drives that side of its body down into the

Horned lizard



Regal horned lizard

Scientific classification

Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
Subphylum:	Vertebrata
Class:	Reptilia
Order:	Squamata
Suborder:	Lacertilia
Family:	Phrynosomatidae
Genus:	<i>Phrynosoma</i>
	Wiegmann, 1828

Species

See text.

ground so the predator cannot easily get its lower jaw underneath the lizard.

Species and subspecies

- Giant horned lizard, *Phrynosoma asio* Cope, 1864
- Short-tailed horned lizard, *Phrynosoma braconnieri* Duméril, 1870
- Cedros Island horned lizard, *Phrynosoma cerroense* Stejneger, 1893
- Texas horned lizard, *Phrynosoma cornutum* (Harlan, 1825)
- Coast horned lizard, *Phrynosoma coronatum*
 - Cape horned lizard, *P. c. coronatum* (Blainville, 1835)
 - San Diego horned lizard, *P. c. blainvillii* Gray, 1839
 - California horned lizard, *P. c. frontale* Van Denburgh, 1894
 - Central peninsular horned lizard, *P. c. jamesi* Schmidt, 1922
 - Northern peninsular horned lizard, *P. c. schmidtii* Barbour, 1921
- Ditmars' horned lizard or rock horned lizard, *Phrynosoma ditmarsii* Stejneger, 1906
- Short-horned lizard, *Phrynosoma douglassii*
 - *P. d. brachycercum* H.M. Smith, 1942
 - *P. d. douglasii* (Bell, 1828)
- Greater short-horned lizard, *Phrynosoma hernandesi* Girard, 1858
- Flat-tail horned lizard, *Phrynosoma mcallii* (Hallowell, 1852)
- Roundtail horned lizard, *Phrynosoma modestum* Girard, 1852
- Mexican Plateau horned lizard or Chihuahua Desert horned lizard, *Phrynosoma orbiculare*
 - *P. o. boucardii* (Duméril & Bocourt, 1870)
 - *P. o. bradti* Horowitz, 1955
 - *P. o. orbiculare* (Linnaeus, 1789)
 - *P. o. orientale* Horowitz, 1955
 - *P. o. cortezii* (Bocourt, 1870)
 - *P. o. dugesii* (Bocourt, 1870)
- Desert horned lizard, *Phrynosoma platyrhinos*
 - Southern desert horned lizard, *P. p. calidiarum* Cope, 1896
 - Northern Desert Horned Lizard, *P. p. platyrhinos* Girard, 1852
 - Sonoran horned lizard, *P. p. goodei* Stejneger, 1893
- Regal horned lizard, *Phrynosoma solare* Gray, 1845
- Mexican horned lizard, *Phrynosoma taurus* Dugès, 1873
- Gulf Coast horned lizard, *Phrynosoma wigginsi* Montanucci, 2004



Texas horned lizard



Comparison of *P. modestum* and *P. platyrhinos*

Symbol

The genus of horned lizards is the official state reptile of Wyoming.^[4]

The Texas horned lizard is the state reptile of Texas and the "horned frog" is the mascot of Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas.

Notes

- ¹ Middendorf III, G.A.; Sherbrooke, W.C. & Braun, E.J. (2001): Comparison of Blood Squirted from the Circumorbital Sinus and Systemic Blood in a Horned Lizard, *Phrynosoma cornutum*. *The Southwestern Naturalist.*, 46(3): 384-387.
- ² Sherbrooke, W.C. & Middendorf III, G.A. (2001): Blood-Squirting Variability in Horned Lizards (*Phrynosoma*). *Copeia.*, 2001(4): 1114-1122.
- ³ Sherbrooke, W.C. & Middendorf III, G.A. (2004): Responses of Kit Foxes (*Vulpes macrotis*) to Antipredator Blood-Squirting and Blood of Texas Horned Lizards (*Phrynosoma cornutum*). *Copeia.*, 2004(3): 652-658.
- ⁴ "State symbols" (http://soswy.state.wy.us/SecretaryDesk/StateInfo_Symbols.aspx) . Wyoming Secretary of State's Office. 2011. Retrieved January 22, 2011.

External links

- HornedLizards Yahoo Group: Horned Lizard Preservation and Discussion (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HornedLizards/>)
- Horned lizard skulls and info at Digimorph.org (<http://www.digimorph.org/resources/horned.phtml>)
- Horned Lizard Conservation Society (<http://www.hornedlizards.org/>)
- Phrynosoma.Org: HL Species, Husbandry, and Conservation Info (<http://www.phrynosoma.org/>)
- Phrynosoma.Org: Forum (<http://forum.phrynosoma.org/>)
- Zipcodezoo.com (http://zipcodezoo.com/Key/Animalia/Phrynosoma_Genus.asp)
- Horned Lizards at UTexas.edu (<http://uts.cc.utexas.edu/~varanus/phryno.html>)
- Argentine ants linked to declines in coastal horned lizards (<http://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/newsrel/science/mclizard.htm>)
- Texas Christian University mascot: What's a Horned Frog? (http://www.admissions.tcu.edu/funstuff/horned_frog.asp)
- Horny Toads - Field study of Short-horned Lizards by students of Waterville Elementary School (<http://depts.washington.edu/natmap/projects/waterville/>)

Retrieved from "http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Horned_lizard&oldid=544447180"

Categories: Phrynosomatids | Endangered species | Symbols of Wyoming

-
- This page was last modified on 15 March 2013 at 19:40.
 - Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License; additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy.
Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization.