

# Mexican Beaded Lizard

*Heloderma horridum*



## Physical Characteristics

- The tail is the longest part of the Mexican beaded lizard. The body is long, and covered in hard thick scales, with the belly being covered in soft scales.
- Coloration: The scales are often dark black or brown with yellow spots scattered along the tail and neck.
- Sexual dimorphism: The male is larger than the female. The two sexes also have different body and tail shapes.
- The bead-like scales are the most predominant feature on these lizards.

## Size

- Length: 2-4 ft.
- Weight: 3-8lbs.

## Lifespan

- 20-40 years

## Behaviors

- They are nocturnal and hide in their burrows during the day. As the night progresses, the lizard becomes more aggressive.
- Terrestrial
- Vocalizations: Mexican Beaded Lizards have the ability to hiss when they feel threatened

## Diet

- Wild: Carnivorous, they eat young rabbits, rodents, birds, lizards, frogs.
- Zoo: Small rodents

## Reproduction

- Incubation/Gestation Period: 6-7 months
- Clutch/Litter Size: 2-22
- Breeding Behaviors: Courtship and mating happen in September and October. The males will fight other males, and whoever wins will get to mate with the female. The female will lay the eggs between October and December.

## Habitat and Range

- Habitat: Dry forests, woodlands, rock edges, canyons. Temperate, tropical, terrestrial
- Range: central and western Mexico

## Conservation

- IUCN Status: Least Concern
- Contributing factors: Humans kill this species out of fear because they are venomous. Their habitat is also being destroyed by humans.

## Classification

- Kingdom: Animalia
- Phylum: Chordata
- Class: Reptilia



- Order: Squamata
- Family: Helodermatidae
- Genus: *Heloderma*
- Species: *Heloderma horridum*

#### **Interesting Facts**

- One of the only two species of venomous lizards in the world.
- Unlike snakes, they cannot eject their venom, they have to chew the venom into their victims!
- They are related to the Gila Monster.
- The tail of the Mexican beaded lizard stores their fat after they eat a meal, which means they can go days without eating.