



# PERENTIE

## Description

The Perentie is Australia's largest lizard. The body is creamy-white with brownish-yellow markings on their back. The head and neck are pale creamy-white and yellow with a brown or black pattern down the throat. It has a forked tongue and numerous very sharp, slightly curved teeth. The Perentie also has a strong tail and powerful legs with five, clawed toes.

## Diet

Perenties are **carnivores** and eat a variety of food, including turtle eggs, insects, birds, other reptiles, and small mammals and marsupials. Perenties track their prey by sight or by sensing with their tongue. Once caught, the Perentie will violently shake the prey until it is dead and then swallow it whole.

## In the wild

When Perenties feel threatened, they rise up, their throat swells and they hiss. If this fails to scare the predator away, they run away. Its powerful tail may also be used as a means of defence.

## Threats

Perenties are sometimes hunted for food by man or eaten by Dingos.

## At Perth Zoo

Perth Zoo's Perenties can be seen in the **Reptile Encounter**. They can be seen inside the exhibit or in a special outdoor exhibit where they bask in the sun.

**Scientific Name**  
*Varanus giganteus*

## Conservation Status

Extinct

Extinct in the Wild

Critically Endangered

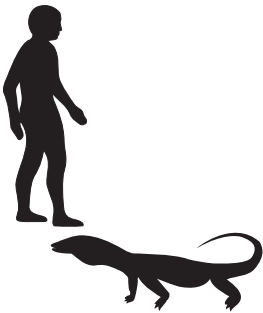
Endangered

Vulnerable

Near-Threatened

**Least Concern**

Data Deficient



**Body Length:** 2.3–2.5 m

**Incubation:** 8 months

**Number of eggs:** 10–15



Distribution ■

**Distribution:** Central Western Australia  
and Central Australia

**Habitat:** Arid regions

## Did you know?

The Perentie is a monitor (also known as a goanna) and Australia has about 25 of the world's known 56 species of monitors. As a monitor, it is related to the much larger Komodo Dragon. 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.

