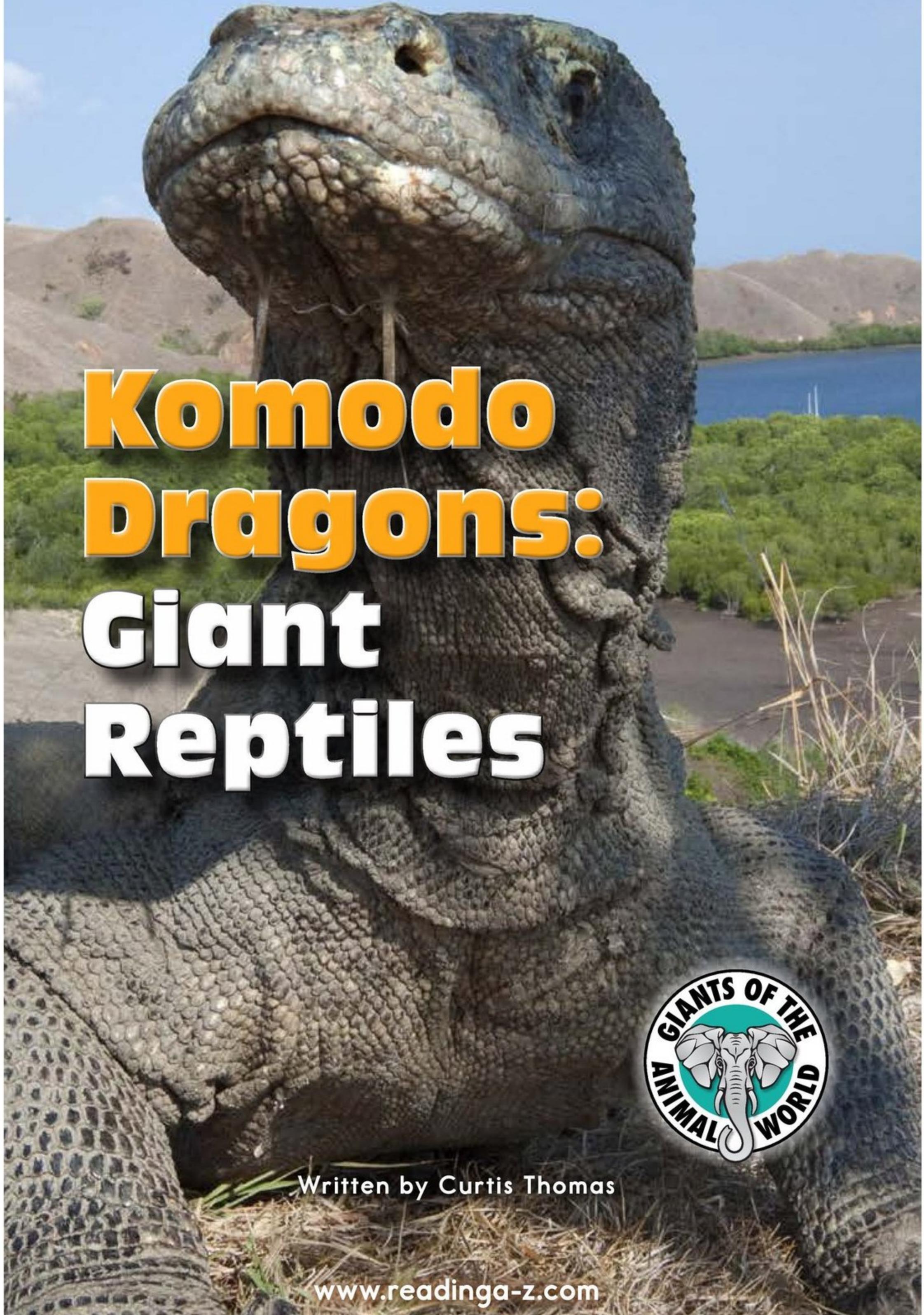


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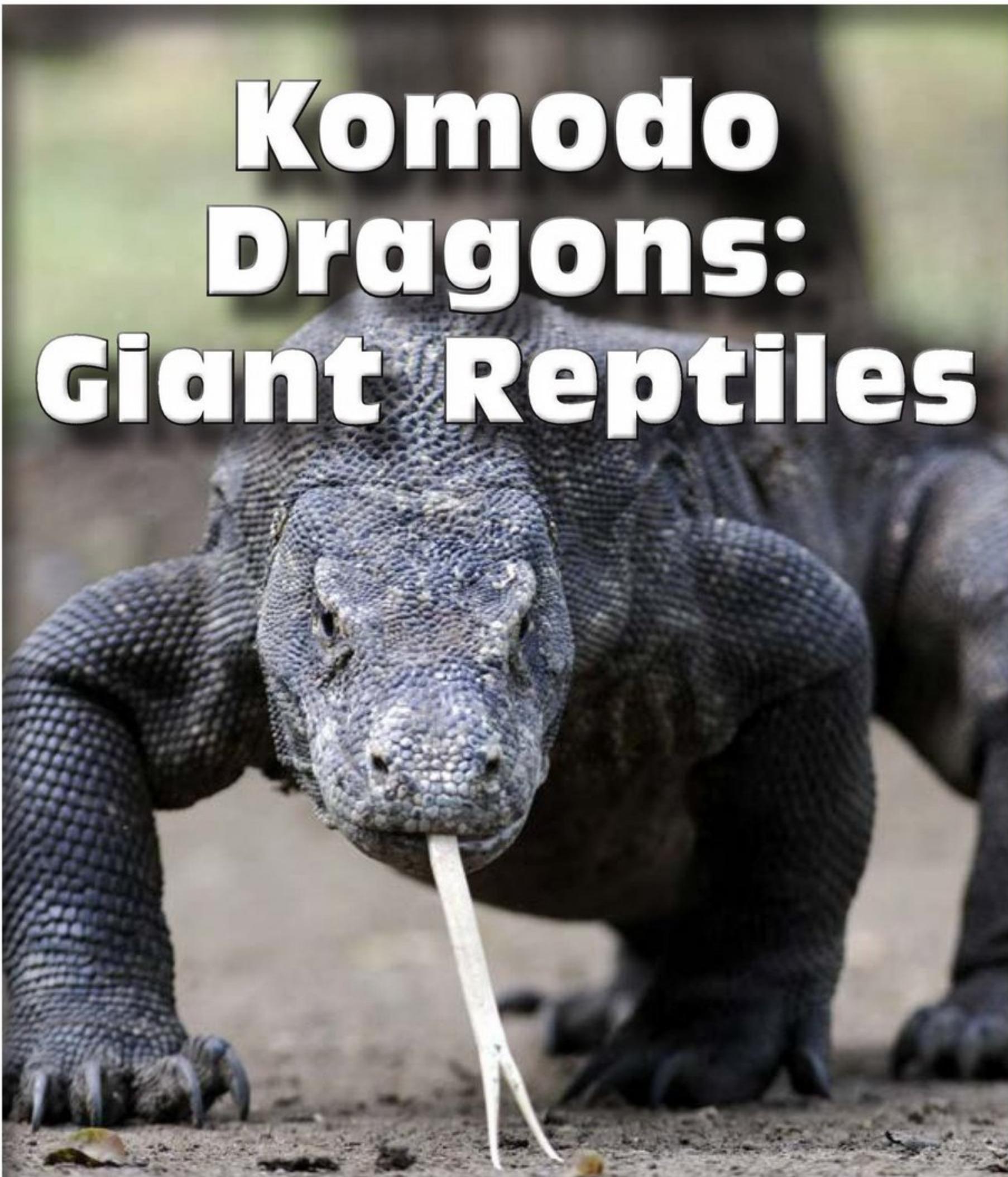
Komodo Dragons: Giant Reptiles



Written by Curtis Thomas

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Focus Question

What makes the Komodo dragon an interesting reptile?

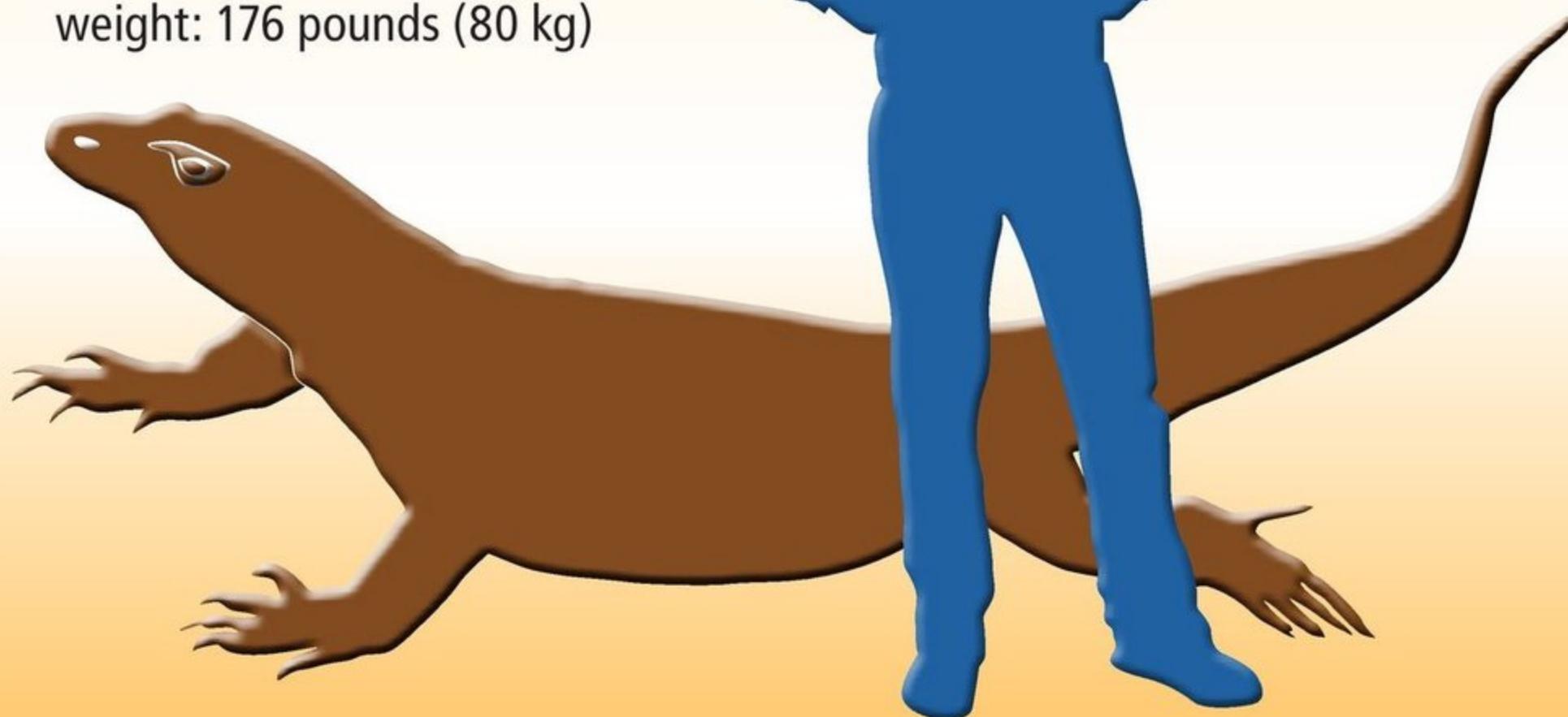


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How Big Is It?

Komodo dragon
length: 10 feet (3 m)
weight: 176 pounds (80 kg)



Human
height: 6 feet (1.8 m)
weight: 176 pounds (80 kg)

Very Big Lizards

Komodo dragons are the
biggest lizards in the world.

Lizards are **reptiles**.

Snakes, turtles, and alligators
are also reptiles.

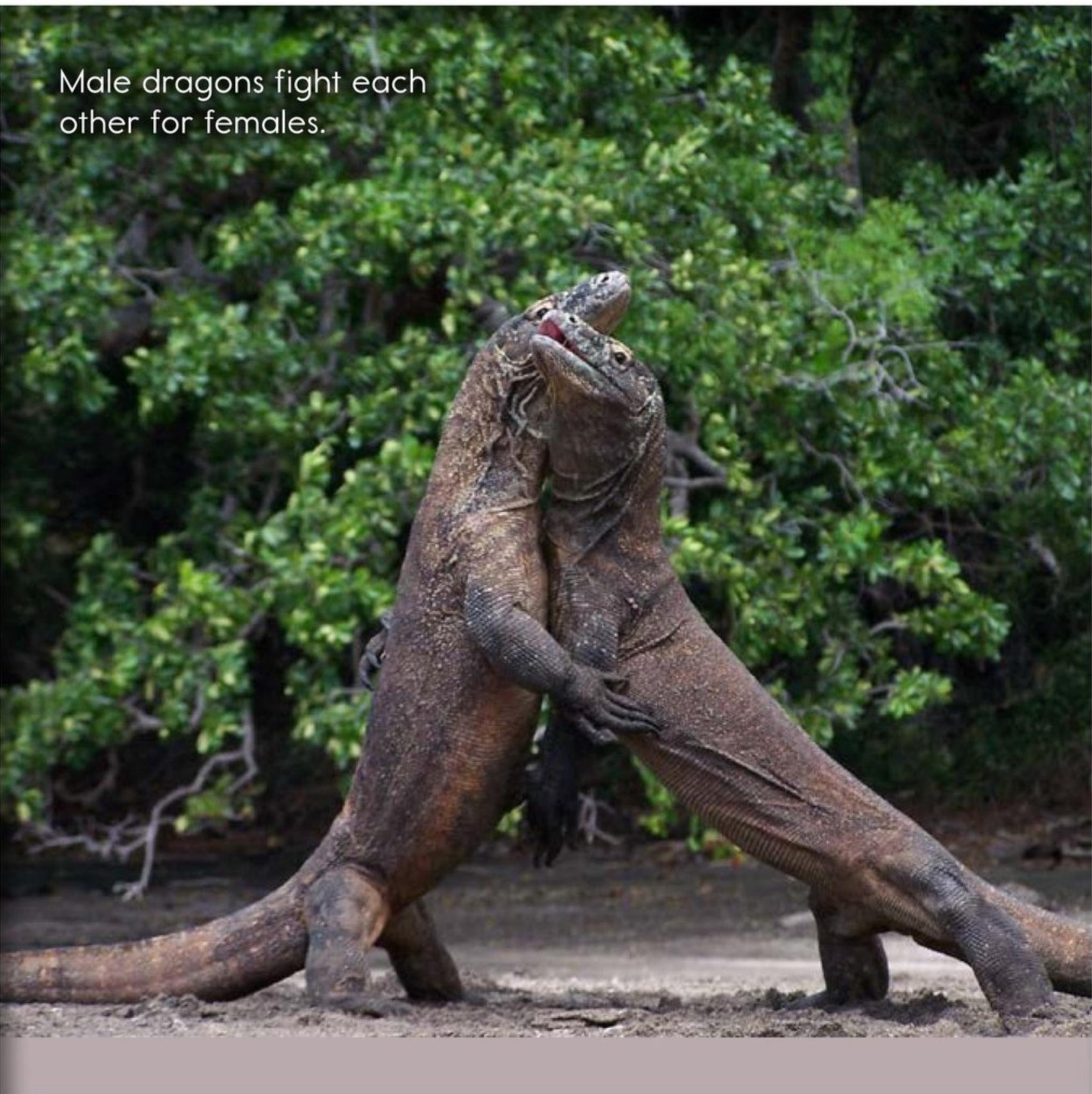
Komodo dragons can be as long
as two big bathtubs.

They are good **hunters** with sharp
teeth and claws.



Komodo dragons live in areas with patches of shade.

Male dragons fight each other for females.



Ready for a Fight

Komodo dragons have long, strong bodies.

They use their teeth and claws to get food.

They also use their teeth and claws to fight other dragons.

Komodo dragons have hard **plates**
on their bodies.
The plates protect them.



The bony plates in a dragon's skin make it feel rough.

What Makes a Komodo Dragon a Reptile?



All reptiles

- have a backbone
- have scales or bony plates
- breathe with lungs

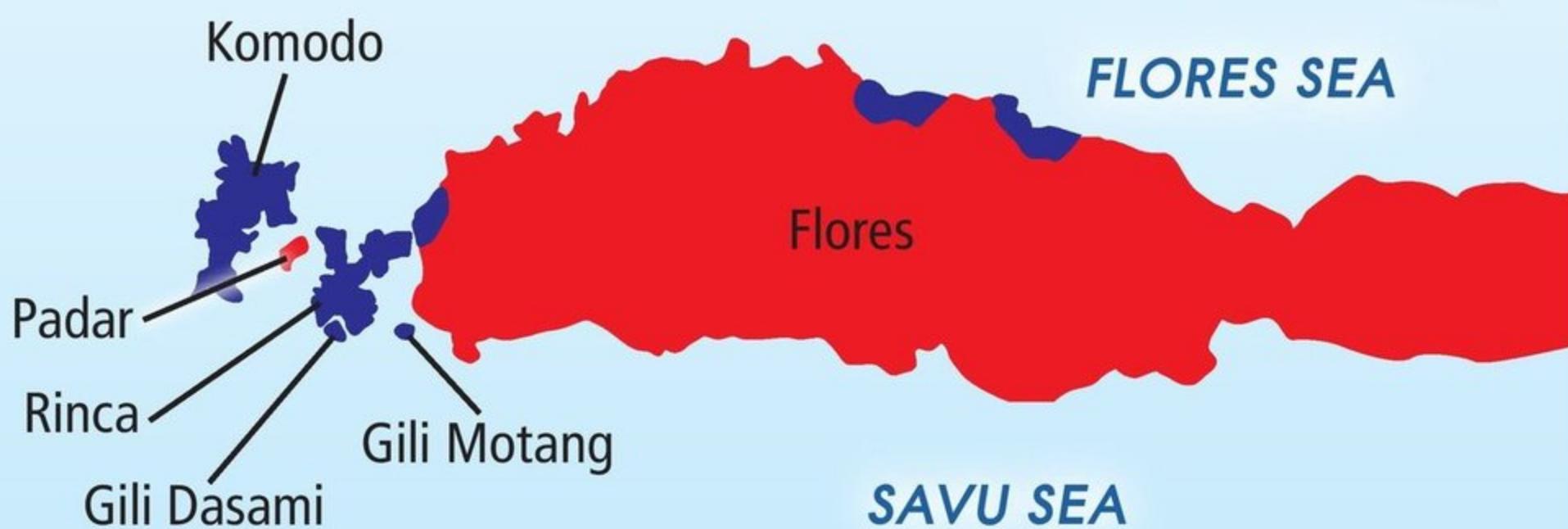
Most reptiles

- lay eggs
- are cold-blooded

Where Komodo Dragons Live



Lesser Sunda Islands



- Komodo dragons: present range
- Komodo dragons: past range

Hot Home

Wild Komodo dragons only live
in Asia.

They live in forests.

The forests can have
very hot weather.
Komodo dragons stay cool
in **burrows**.



Dragons dig their own
burrow or use another
animal's burrow.



Komodo dragons eat many kinds of animals.

Mealtime!

Komodo dragons only eat meat.

Their favorite foods are deer,
wild pigs, and water buffalo.

They also eat young dragons!

On the Hunt

Komodo dragons wait for an animal to pass by.

Then they **attack** with their teeth and claws.

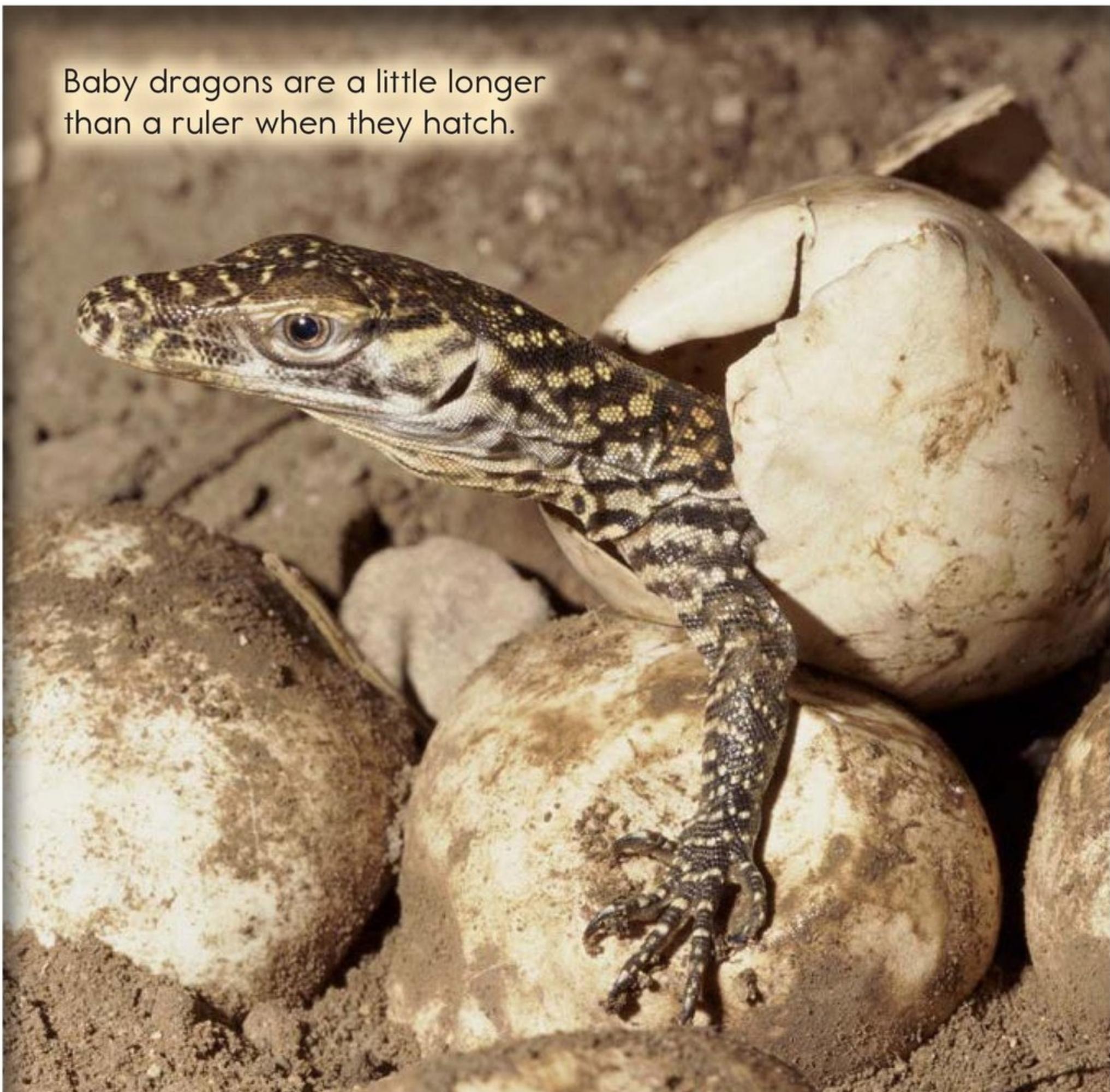
The hurt animal runs away and dies.

Then the dragons use their tongues to find the dead animal.

Many dragons may share a meal.



Baby dragons are a little longer than a ruler when they hatch.



Baby Dragons

Female Komodo dragons lay many eggs in a nest in the ground. They protect the eggs from other animals. The eggs **hatch** in six to nine months.

Young dragons in trees eat insects and geckos.



Baby Komodo dragons climb trees
to stay safe from adult dragons.

They stay there for two years
or longer.

Male dragons can live to the age
of sixty.

Female dragons live about half
as long.

Jumbo Lizards

Komodo dragons are special.
They are very strong reptiles.
They are the biggest lizards
in the world.



A Komodo dragon hunts for its next meal.

Glossary

- attack** (v.) to act in a harmful way toward another (p. 12)
- burrows** (n.) holes dug in the ground by an animal for use as homes (p. 10)
- hatch** (v.) to break open, as when a bird breaks out of an egg (p. 13)
- hunters** (n.) people or other animals that get food by killing other animals (p. 5)
- plates** (n.) hard, often flat body parts that cover an animal's body and protect it from harm (p. 7)
- reptiles** (n.) cold-blooded animals that have backbones and are covered with scales or plates (p. 4)

Words to Know

attack

hunters

burrows

plates

hatch

reptiles

Front and back cover: Komodo dragons have hard scales on their skin. The scales help keep them safe.

Title page: Komodo dragons have a long, thin tongue with two points at the end.

Page 3: Sharp claws help Komodo dragons dig, fight, and get food.

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Komodo Dragons: Giant Reptiles
Giants of the Animal World
Level I Leveled Book
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