Rock Monitor Lizard(*Varanus albigularis*)

**Conservation Status:** Least Concern

All monitor lizards have elongated bodies, strong limbs, muscular tails, and strong claws. Rock monitors have long necks, which support their elongated head. They have external ears, movable eyelids, and a snakelike protrusible tongue. Their body is blackish or gray-brown, with five or six rows of dull yellow blotches. Some individuals in the southern part of the species range have white throats.

**Fun Facts**

1. Monitors are more closely related to snakes than to other lizards.
2. The rock monitor is the heaviest and second-longest lizard found on the continent.

**Habitat**

The rock monitor is found in a variety of dry habitats, including savannas, plains, steppes, and prairies. It’s mostly absent from desert interiors, rainforests, and thick scrub forest.

**Diet**

Carrion, baby tortoises, eggs, and insects.

**Predators**

Honey badger

**Behavior**

The rock monitor lizard is primarily a solitary, terrestrial species. They avoid activity during extreme midday heat in the summer. In the winter, they are generally far less active, but they do remain alert. If they are cornered or threatened, they will puff up their throat and body, lash their tail, and bite. Monitors sometimes travel long distances in search of prey.

**Breeding**

During the breeding season, receptive females are known to climb into trees. When a male locates a female, the pair will mate for one or two days before the male will leave in search of another female. Females will lay up to two clutches of up to 50 eggs per year.

**Size**

Length:0.85-2 m

**Weight**

6-8 kg

**Life Span:** 8-10 years

**Incubation Period:** 1 year

**Average number of offspring:** up to 50 eggs per clutch