



Chuckwalla

Sauromalus ater

Description: Chuckwallas are large bulky lizards with a fold of skin on the sides of their belly. They average 16 inches in length. The males are typically red bodied with black feet. Females have yellowish bands. They have pores on the insides of their wrists that they use for marking.

Habitat: They are found in dry and arid places, usually with lots of rocks to both climb on and hide under.

Range: Typically, they are found in the south western United States, in New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and California.

Life Span: approximately 15 years.

Natural Diet: In the wild, chuckwallas eat fruit, leaves, buds, and flowers. Occasionally, they will eat insects.



Zoo Diet: Chopped vegetables, fruits and greens. Occasionally crickets.

Behavior: When Chuckwallas feel threatened, they will scurry under rocks and gulp in large amounts of air, inflating their body making it difficult for a predator to extract it from a crevice. Usually males will mark off their territory with the musk that is secreted from the glands on the insides of their wrists.

Reproduction: Breeding takes place in the summer months. Females will lay 5-16 eggs at a time.