



## Spiny Tailed Monitor *Varanus acanthurus*

**Description:** Also called the ridge-tailed monitor because of the small spikes that ring its tail. They are a small lizard that varies in color from dark brown to a yellowish tan. The spots and patterns of its skin help with camouflage.



**Habitat:** Dry grasslands and rocky hills.

**Range:** Northwestern parts of Australia and the small islands bordering the coast.

**Life Span:** Can live over 20 years in the wild and over 30 in captivity.

**Natural Diet:** Mainly insects, but can include other lizards.



**Zoo Diet:** Crickets and mealworms.

**Behavior:** They are diurnal, which means they are most active in daylight hours. They spend most of their time basking or hiding in rocky crevices. Their spiny tail makes it hard for predators to pull them from a hole or hiding spot.



**Reproduction:** Eggs are laid by females in clutches of about 12 eggs. They will incubate and then hatch approximately 3-5 months later.

**Conservation:** Least concern.