

YELLOW-SPOTTED MONITOR

HABITAT

The Yellow-spotted Monitor lives inside burrows amongst coastal waters and floodplains^[1] across northern Australia, which includes Western Australia, the Northern Territory, and Queensland, excluding the central arid zones.^[2]

DIET

They have a great sense of smell and chase down anything they can overpower, ranging from crustaceans, fish, insects, rodents, and other monitors.^[3] They are also excellent diggers^[4] and pull crocodile and turtle eggs out of the ground to feed on.^[5]

REPRODUCTION

They breed during the wet season from January to March.^[6] Females are also known to be able to reproduce on their own without the help of a male.^[7] The females lay around 7 to 16 eggs per clutch and lay up to 2 clutches per year in the wild or over 3 clutches per year in captivity.^[8] The eggs can then take anywhere around 7 months to hatch.^[9]

THREATS

The introduction of Cane Toads in Northern Australia has caused a significant decline in their population because they have a strong natural tendency to eat them and then die from the ingested toxins.^[10] They are also preyed on by cats and foxes in desert areas.^[11]

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT

It is illegal to take or interfere with them in the Northern Territory^[12] and Queensland without a permit.^[13]



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DESCRIPTION

The males grow up to 1.5m long, while the females only grow up to around 90cm long. They are predominantly brown with rows of dark spots and scattered light spots along their backs.^[14]

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Varanus panoptes^[15]

CONSERVATION STATUS

Least Concern^[16]

CLASS

Reptiles^[17]

LIFESPAN

Up to 18 years^[18]

POPULATION SIZE

Unknown^[19]

FUN FACT

When searching for prey and threats, they often stand up on their back legs and balance with their tails so they can see longer distances.^[20]

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- [17] DES, 'Species profile—*Varanus panoptes* (yellow-spotted monitor)', Class.
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