

What are Monitor Lizards?

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About Monitor Lizards

- They are a **group of large reptiles belonging to the family Varanidae**.
- They are known for their **distinctive appearance**, with **long bodies, powerful limbs, and well-developed tails**.
- They are considered to be the **most intelligent of all lizards** and some of the most intelligent reptiles in general.
- **Distribution:**
 - They are mainly **native to Asia, Africa, and Australia**.
 - **India is home to four Monitor lizards** – the **Bengal Monitor** (*Varanus bengalensis*), the **Asian Water monitor** (*Varanus salvator*), the **Yellow monitor** (*Varanus flavescens*) and the **Desert monitor** (*Varanus griseus*).
- **Features:**
 - They have **large claws, powerful tails, long necks, and well-developed legs**.
 - They can **move quickly and powerfully** in pursuit of prey.
 - **Most monitor lizards are terrestrial and largely carnivorous**.

- They **do not blink** and **they have very good vision**.
- They **have forked tongues** which they use for smelling.
- **Conservation Status:**
 - **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule 1**

Key Facts about Komodo dragon:

- It is a **type of monitor lizard**.
- **Scientific Name: *Varanus komodoensis***.
- It is the **largest species of monitor lizard**, and it can **grow up to ten feet long and weigh 300 pounds**.
- They are also **generally known to be the most dangerous** types of monitor lizards
- The **skin of a Komodo dragon is also unusual** compared to other monitors. It **has tiny bones called osteoderms** throughout its skin, which reinforces its toughness against predators.

Q1) What are Osteoderms?

Osteoderms are bony deposits embedded in the skin of certain animals, primarily reptiles. These structures provide protection and structural support to the body, often serving as armor against predators or environmental hazards. Osteoderms are typically found in the dermal layer of the skin and can vary in size, shape, and arrangement depending on the species.

Source: [Monitor lizard rescued from residential areas in Thane, released in the wild](#)

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/what-are-monitor-lizards/>

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