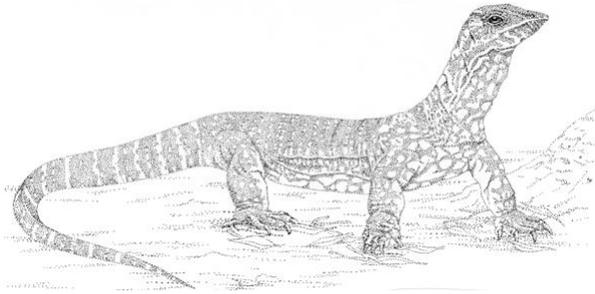


Rosenberg's goanna



Scientific name:

Varanus rosenbergi

Varanus = lizard

rosenbergi = named after a German naturalist, surveyor and collector from 1817-1888

Kangaroo Island's largest land predator

During the warmer summer months Rosenberg's goannas are frequently seen roaming widely over Kangaroo Island in search of food. The island is one of their last refuges, as they are now extremely rare throughout mainland southern Australia.



Communal burrows

Rosenberg's goannas are active during the day. In the evenings and in cooler weather, they retire into shallow burrows. These burrows are dug in the soil, or located in

hollow logs, rock crevices and thick vegetation. There is generally a network of connected burrows with many entrances. Burrows are often shared, with the same burrows inhabited by different goannas on different nights.

The burrows provide protection from the weather and predators.

Powerful bodies

The body of the Rosenberg's goanna is powerfully built and can grow to 1.5 metres long. Their strong limbs are equipped with long, sharp, curved claws and their tails are long, slender and muscular. The teeth of the Rosenberg's Goanna are also large and curve backwards, making it difficult for captured prey to escape from their jaws.

Smelling the air

When the goanna is alert, its long forked tongue flickers in and out of its mouth constantly. The tongue is used to 'sniff' the air and detect any scents of possible prey.

Cosmopolitan diet

The Rosenberg's goanna consumes a variety of organisms, found from dense bush to open beaches. Their menu consists of spiders, scorpions and other large insects, as well as frogs, snakes, lizards, small birds and mammals. The scavenging of carrion killed on the road is often a welcome addition. The Rosenberg's goanna is also credited with successfully consuming rabbits introduced to Kangaroo Island earlier last century, as it will eagerly dig for prey.

Natural incubators



After mating in summer, the female goanna excavates a 50 to 60 cm long tunnel in a termite mound and fashions a nest chamber at the end of it.

She then sits within the access shaft, leaving just her head out of the tunnel

surveying the surroundings, while she lays 10 to 17 leathery eggs. The mother seals the nest and leaves the termites to reconstruct their mound around the egg chamber. Both the male and female goannas keep a watch over the termite mound during the reconstruction, possibly to ward off



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predators intent on raiding the new nest.accumsan tortor consectetur accumsan.

The decaying material within the termite mound creates a warm, stable, humid atmosphere of 25-30 degrees Celsius, perfect for incubating the Rosenberg's Goanna's eggs. When spring arrives, eight months later, the eggs hatch and the young goannas dig themselves out of the mound and into the sunlight. The mothers are often seen around the nest at this time and may help the young out of the termite mound, or protect the young from ravens, magpies and currawongs waiting to prey on the new goannas. Young goannas are rarely seen and may spend much of their youth in trees.

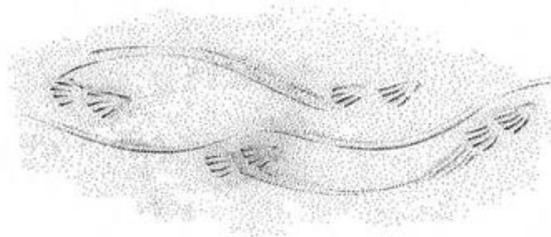


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Sun bathers

Rosenberg's goanna are unable to control their own body temperature and need to bask in the sun for at least half an hour each day before becoming active. There is usually a mound of earth at their burrow entrance that they use for this purpose. The Rosenberg's goanna skin is a darker colour than other goannas, so they can absorb and retain solar energy more readily, giving them longer times for foraging in Kangaroo Island's cooler, denser vegetation.

Please drive slowly, as the goanna may be sluggish and unable to avoid your speeding car.



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