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Brief Description on Komodo Dragon and its Reproduction System

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Commentary

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DESCRIPTION

The Komodo dragon (*Varanus komodoensis*) sometimes known as the Komodo monitor is an indigenous monitor lizard to the Indonesian islands of Komodo, Rinca, Flores and Gili Motang. It is the world's largest extant lizard measuring up to 3 metres (10 feet) in length and weighing up to 70 kilogrammes (150 lb). Komodo dragons are apex predators that as their size dominate the ecosystems in which they live. The prey that Komodo dragons seek and ambush includes invertebrates, birds and mammals.

Two glands in the lower jaw are supposed to secrete a range of lethal proteins giving them a venomous bite. Although the biological significance of these proteins is unclear, the glands have been shown to secrete anticoagulant. The group hunting behaviour of Komodo dragons is unrivalled in the reptile world. The main food of Komodo dragons is *Javan rusa* (*Rusa timorensis*) however they also eat a lot of carrion. Komodo dragons attack humans on a regular basis.

Mating takes place from May to August and the eggs are laid in September; up to 20 eggs can be laid at once in an abandoned megapode nest or a self-dug nesting hole. The eggs are incubated for seven to eight months before hatching in April when insect populations are at their peak. Young Komodo dragons are prey for predators such as cannibalistic adults hence they prefer to live in trees. They mature in 8 to 9 years and have a life expectancy of up to 30 years. Western scientists first discovered Komodo dragons in 1910. They are popular zoo attractions due to their big size and terrifying reputation.

In the wild, their range has shrunk as a result of human activities and it is expected to shrink even more as a result of climate change. As a result, the IUCN Red List has them listed as Endangered. Indonesian law protects them and

Komodo National Park was established in 1980 to aid in their preservation. In scientific literature, the Komodo dragon is also known as the Komodo monitor or the Komodo Island monitor.

The Komodo dragon enjoys hot, dry environments and can be found in low-elevation dry, open grassland, savanna and tropical woodland. It is most active during the day as an ectotherm though it does have some nighttime activity. Komodo dragons are solitary creatures who only get together to procreate and eat. They are capable of sprinting up to 20 km/h (12 mph), diving up to 4.5 m (15 ft) and climbing trees successfully with their sharp claws when they are young.

The Komodo dragon can stand on its hind legs and use its tail as a support to catch prey that is out of reach. Its claws are mostly employed as weapons as it matures as climbing is impractical due to its large size. With its muscular forelimbs and claws, the Komodo dragon digs burrows ranging in size from 1 m to 3 m (3.3 to 9.8 ft) wide for shelter. It is able to store body heat throughout the night and reduce its basking period the next morning due to its big size and habit of sleeping in these burrows. The Komodo dragon hunts in the afternoon but prefers to stay out of the sun during the warmest portion of the day. These particular resting spots are indicated by droppings and cleared of vegetation and are frequently found on slopes with calm sea breezes. They can be used to ambush deer from a strategic position.

Males compete for females and territory during this time by struggling on their hind legs with the loser eventually being pinned to the ground. When preparing for a battle, these males may vomit or defecate. The female's receptivity will be determined by the winner of the fight flicking his lengthy tongue at her. During the early stages of courting, females are aggressive and oppose with their claws and fangs. To avoid getting harmed, the male must totally restrain the female during coitus.

Males stroking their chins on the female, hard scratches to the back and licking are examples of other courtship displays. When a male inserts one of his hemipenes into the female's cloaca, copulation happens. Komodo dragons are known to be monogamous and develop "pair bonds", an uncommon lizard habit.

From August to September, female Komodos lay their eggs in a variety of locations in one research, 60 percent placed their eggs in the nests of orange-footed scrubfowl (a moundbuilder or megapode), 20 percent on ground level and 20 percent in mountainous places. To keep other dragons from eating the eggs, the females create several camouflage nests/holes. Clutches typically contain 20 eggs with an incubation period of 7–8 months.

The neonates, who emerge out of their eggshells with an egg tooth that falls off soon long put in a lot of work during the hatching process. The hatchlings may lie in their eggshells for hours after cutting themselves out before beginning to burrow their way out of the nest. They are defense less from birth and are prey to predators. Sixteen young from a single nest averaged 46.5 cm in length and 105.1 grams in weight.

Because juvenile dragons make up 10% of their food, young Komodo dragons spend much of their first few years in trees where they are reasonably safe from predators including cannibalistic adults. Because medium-sized prey is scarce on the islands, cannibalism may be useful in maintaining adult size. When the young approach a kill, they roll around in faeces and sleep in the intestines of eviscerated animals to frighten off the hungry adults. Komodo dragons mature in about 8 to 9 years and can live for up to 30 years.