

# Did you know?

## Desert Jerboa

**Found:** North Africa, Arabia, Central Asia



Although around only 10cm in length, this small nocturnal rodent can leap as far as 3m using its long hind legs. An equally long tail provides balance as it hops at speed over the sand in a nightly quest for seeds and plants.

## Thorny Devil

**Found:** Australia



This buff, tan and grey lizard is well camouflaged against rock and sand. The Thorny Devil is covered in an armoury of sharp spines which protects it against predators while it forages for ants. Catching them with a projecting tongue, the Thorny Devil can eat up to 3000 ants in one sitting.

## Namaqua Sandgrouse

**Found:** Southern Africa



The mottled brown wings of this sandgrouse provide excellent camouflage against stony ground, while the thick plumage insulates the bird effectively from desert temperature extremes. Its breast feathers have a sponge-like quality which absorb moisture and enable adults to supply nesting chicks with water. Sandgrouse rely on seeds which they search out in areas of rainfall.

## Western Diamondback Rattlesnake

**Found:** North America



This highly poisonous snake feeds mainly on small mammals, birds and lizards. The toxins in its venom can also be deadly to larger animals and even humans. Its body is covered in a broad diamond pattern, while its distinctive rattle – composed of loosely connected horny sections – is used to deter intruders.

## Dromedary Camel

**Found:** Northern Africa and Southwest Asia



Now almost extinct in the wild, the Dromedary provides humans with hair, milk and vital desert transportation. Its single hump stores fat and when dehydrated the Dromedary can drink up to 50 litres of water in just a few minutes. They are able to conserve moisture by reducing sweating and have a double row of eyelashes to keep out sand.

## Scorpion

**Found:** Desert regions worldwide



This ancient group of arachnids locate prey by touch and can use their highly poisonous venom to paralyse other animals. To help retain moisture in arid desert conditions, scorpions have a tough exoskeleton. Females give birth to live young which they carry on their backs.