



# BRONTY'S FACT SHEET

## Scorpion

### **The Basics**

Scorpions are common arachnids found in gardens and forests throughout Australia. They are found under logs, rocks and in shallow burrows in earth banks. The desert species construct deep spiral burrows in desert sand. Scorpions are mostly nocturnal but they can be active during the day, especially during prolonged wet weather. Scorpions tend to be larger and more venomous in the northern parts of Australia. The largest Australian scorpions can grow to 12 cm long, but many forest dwellers are only small, at around 2 to 3 cm long.

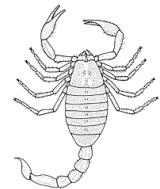


### **Appearance and Senses**

Despite having six to twelve eyes - an obvious pair at the centre of the carapace and two to five smaller eyes on each side - scorpions do not have good eyesight. However, they can readily distinguish light from dark and appear to have excellent low light sensitivity, which helps them to both avoid harsh sunlight and to navigate by starlight or moonlight. They sense their way around using sensory hairs and slit organs on the legs, pedipalps and body that pick up vibrations and scents. They also have special organs on the underside of the body called pectines, which pick up ground textures and scents. Scorpions breathe through four pairs of book lungs on the underside of the abdomen. Female scorpions are more heavily built than males, with shorter tails. Colour ranges from dark grey to light brown or gold, with lighter coloured legs. Scorpions also fluoresce under ultraviolet light, which is a good way for scientists to find them in the field. The fluorescence is thought to serve as an ultraviolet sensitivity mechanism, perhaps allowing the scorpion to avoid damaging light levels.

### **Feeding & Maintenance**

Scorpions don't need a lot of space, a small glass terrarium is ideal. A heat source is required, a light source is sufficient if you live in a warm area. A few rocks, leaves and sandy substrate is ideal. A moist cotton wool ball will provide drinking water. They are low maintenance and after initial set-up costs, are cheap to keep. Feeding is required once per week. Live food is required, crickets are ideal. Crickets can be purchased in store.



### **Reproduction**

Males and females find each other by vibration, scent and touch. During mating, the sensory pectines under the body are used to find a suitable place for the male to deposit his sperm parcel - the spermatophore. The fertilised eggs develop inside her body, and she then gives birth to live young. She carries the pale young scorpions on her back for the first few days or weeks, until they are strong enough to become independent. The young then disperse to find food and shelter. Scorpions take a long time to reach maturity, moulting frequently (up to five or six times over two to six years) in order to grow, and may live for two to ten years. Some have been recorded as living up to 25 years.

### **Toxicity and First Aid**

Australian scorpions can give a painful sting. First aid for a sting is to apply a cold pack and to seek medical aid if pain persists.

**For more information please give us a call on (02) 6652 4308 and we will assist you with any queries.**