

Why do lizards spit blood from their eyes?

At least 8 species of lizards of the genus *Phrynosoma* are capable of bleeding from the eye in cases of necessity. This process is known as auto-bleeding and is a unique defensive strategy to thwart their enemies.

The horned lizard, a small reptile native to Mexico and the southwestern United States, is one of the lizards capable of spitting blood from its eyes.



Because of living in the desert, the horned lizard often has to fight with predators such as wolves, snakes, large rats. When cornered by the enemy, it will spit out blood from its eyes, shoot directly into the enemy's face and quickly escape.

How do lizards shoot blood out of their eyes?

Some lizards have a pouch under the eye called the eye sinus. When faced with a danger, blood flow rushes to the eye cavity causing it to swell. Then, under pressure, the accumulated blood will be sprayed out through the pores in the lower eyelid of the lizard.

Lizards spray blood from their eyes that can reach up to 1.5 meters and can spray continuously to scare enemies.

In addition, their blood contains unpleasant substances such as creating a bad smell or reducing the appetite of predators.

After spewing blood to scare off prey, the lizard's third eyelid is a transparent nictitating membrane that sweeps across the entire surface of the eyeball, pushing excess blood to the back corner of the eye so it falls out.

Hemorrhage in self-defense occurs not only in horned lizards, but some snakes also have this mechanism such as dwarf boas, king snakes and long-nosed snakes, not only from the eyes but also from the nostrils or cloacal (parts) common genitals, intestines and urinary tract).

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