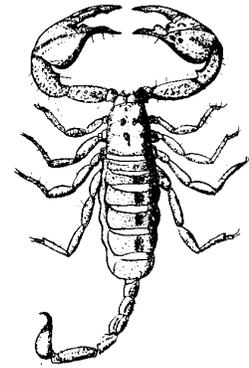




# Scorpions



Class	Order	Species
Arachnida	Scorpiones	1,000+ worldwide, 20-30 in the U.S.

## Range

Scorpions are found worldwide but individual species tend to be restricted to relatively small areas.

## Habitat

Mostly in warm, dry climates in western U. S. but some species live in cold climates and others in tropical climates.

## Niche

Scorpions are general predators of other small arthropods. Some hide under rocks and wood while other species burrow in the ground.

## Diet

**In nature:** predators of any arthropod small enough to handle, prefers soft bodied arthropods.

**In culture:** 1 cricket per week.

## Reproduction

**Growth:** gradual, molts several times.  
**Egg:** the fertilized eggs develop inside the mother and the young are born alive.  
**Immature:** ride on their mother's back until their first molt.  
**Adult:** become sexually mature after last molt; may live for several years.  
**Behavior:** courtship is dance-like. The male grasps the females pedipalpal claws and walks sideways or backward as she follows. Some species entwine their tails together as well. The male digs a hole or finds some other place to hide and mating occurs.

## Physical Characteristics

**Appendages:** chewing mouthparts, the pedipalps (their "claws") are used to capture and handle food. In addition to the pedipalps scorpions have 8 legs.  
**Pectines:** a pair of comb like sensory organs located on the underside of the abdomen, not found in any other animal.  
**Immature:** white until the first molt, quite small (millimeters).  
**Adult:** approximately 17+cm to less than a millimeter in size depending on the species. The species in the Bay Area are usually no larger than 3 inches and are brown in color. The male is more

## Common Species

*Uroctonus mordax* is common in the San Francisco Bay Area.

## Special Adaptations

**Poison:** scorpions sting in self defense and to subdue their prey. Most stings are not serious and have only a local effect. **There are no dangerous (deadly poisonous) scorpions in California** but dangerous species do occur in North Africa, South America, Mexico and one species in Arizona (*Centruroides sculpturatus*).

## Sources

(17) (35)

