

REPTILES AND INVERTEBRATES

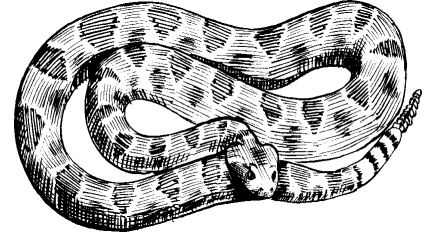
The Reptile and Invertebrate Rooms offer close-up views of snakes, lizards, scorpions, and tarantulas.

REPTILES

Ask the children: *What do you think snakes eat?*

Possible answers:

- mice
- rats
- ground squirrels
- lizards
- snakes



There is a snake in this room that eats RATTLESNAKES. Can you find which one it is?

Answer: Kingsnakes eat rattlesnakes. They kill them by constriction. They are not affected by the rattlesnakes' venom, but a rattlesnake can kill a kingsnake with a well-aimed bite that penetrates its vital organs.

INVERTEBRATES

Move on to the Invertebrate section and look at the scorpions, tarantulas, and insects such as desert stink beetles.

Ask: *What do tarantulas and desert stink beetles have in common?*

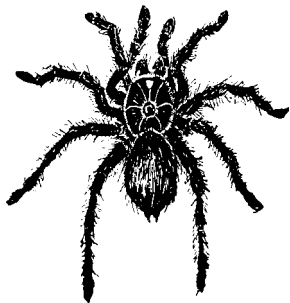
Possible answers:

- many legs
- legs many-jointed
- hard on the outside
- bodies in parts

Ask: *How are they different?*

Possible answers:

- tarantulas have 8 legs, beetles have 6
- tarantulas are hairy, beetles are smooth
- tarantulas don't have wings, beetles do
- tarantulas have 2 body parts, beetles 3



EARTH SCIENCES CAVE

Stop just inside the cave entrance with your group, letting their eyes begin to adjust to the shade. Tell them they are going to go inside the earth to see a wet cave and a dry cave, and that it will be dark and cool. You will first pass through the wet cave.

DRY CAVE

Here you will see examples of fossils and animal remains preserved inside dry caves.

Ask the children: *What kind of animals might live inside a dry cave?*

Possible answers:

- bats
- pack rats
- ringtail cats
- kit foxes
- mountain lions



Tell the children: *Bones or fossils of animals that lived long ago are sometimes found in caves. Can you find any in here?*

MINERAL ROOM

Ask the children: *Can you find a mineral that looks like fingers...is orange...has square crystals...is blue?*

Point out **copper**, **silver**, and **gold**. Mining of these minerals is important in Arizona. Leaving the mineral room, you come outside to the Mine Dump. The Mine Dump is seeded regularly with small, colorful crystals of common minerals. Take a moment to let the kids look for one mineral they would like to take with them.