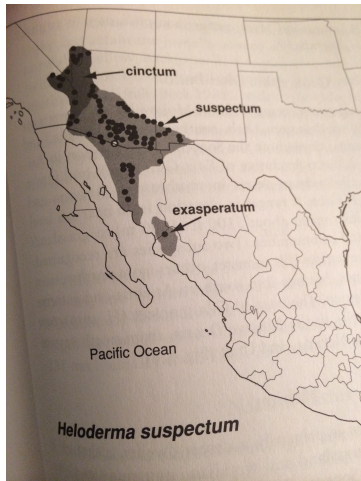


# Gila Monster

## *Heloderma suspectum*



**Range:** SW US and NW Mexico

**SVL:** ♂: 30-36cm (11.7 in)

♀: 30-36cm (11.7 in)

**TL:** ♂-35-50 cm (33 in)

♀- 35-50cm (33 in)

**Weight :** 1kg (2.2 lbs)

**Habitat:** desert and grassland

**Incubation:** 120-145 days

**Eggs:** 2-12

**Dispersal:** no parental care

**Sexual maturity:** 3-5 years

**Nest:** sand

**Social:** Solitary

**Breeding:** n/a

**Activity:** diurnal

**Lifestyle:** terrestrial

**Movement :** generally sedentary

**Food:** reptilian and avian eggs  
young, juvenile mammals

**IUCN:** near threatened

**Subspecies :** 3

**Longevity:** captive: 30 years

Wild: 20 years

**Order:**Squamata **Family:**Helodermitidae

The Gila monster (*Heloderma suspectum*, /'hi:lə/ hee-lə) is a species of venomous lizard native to the southwestern United States and northwestern Mexican state of Sonora. A heavy, slow-moving lizard, up to 60 cm (2.0 ft) long, the Gila monster is the only venomous lizard native to the United States and one of only two known species of venomous lizards in North America, the other being its close relative, the Mexican beaded lizard (*H. horridum*). Though the Gila monster is venomous, its sluggish nature means it represents little threat to humans. However, it has earned a fearsome reputation and is sometimes killed despite being protected by state law in Arizona.

The Gila monster produces venom in modified salivary glands in its lower jaw, unlike snakes, whose venom is produced in the upper jaw.[12] The Gila monster lacks the musculature to forcibly inject the venom; instead, the venom is propelled from the gland to the tooth by chewing