



Crafty Kids Program

Lesson 6: Great Horny Toads!

Horned lizards look tough, but that doesn't mean other animals wouldn't like to make them their lunch. The horned lizard, also sometimes called a horny toad because of its round head, is preyed upon by loggerhead shrikes, hawks, roadrunners, a variety of snakes, coyotes, and foxes.

These little lizards have adapted many layers of defense against predators:

- **The first line of defense is not to be seen at all.** They have patterns on their scales that help them blend in. The lateral scales, (the ones around the edges of the body) break up their shadows, so birds flying overhead don't recognize a lizard shape. Also, they tend to freeze when they see a predator, so their movement doesn't give them away.
- **If that doesn't work and they are spotted, a horned lizard's second line of defense is to look unappetizing.** These lizards can't run fast for long with their flat bodies and short legs. Instead, sharp scales and a crown of horns make this lizard look like something unpleasant to swallow. They can also puff themselves up with air to appear bigger and harder to swallow.
- **If a predator does try to gulp them down, the lizard has one last defense to get out of it.** Some horned lizards can shoot blood out of their eyes. This blood tastes bad, especially to canines, and sometimes the predator will spit the lizard out.

Materials needed:

- balloons (bigger ones work better)
- white construction paper
- staples
- glue sticks
- crayons
- googly eyes

Directions:

1. To prep for project, cut out bodies, headpieces, lateral scales, and top scales from construction and tissue paper. Templates are provided. Staple two halves of bodies together leaving a hole for the balloon just under the head.
2. Give each child a lizard body. First, have them glue top scales in whatever pattern they like.
3. Have them glue on lateral scales next.
4. Then headpieces and eyes.
5. If they want to they can color the bodies with crayons at this point.
5. Put a balloon inside each body and show them how they can blow up their bodies. Have parents tie off balloons for the child.

TYPES OF HORNED LIZARDS AT WHITE SANDS:



Texas horned lizard



Round-tail horned lizard