



Big Spring State Park

TEXAS HORNED LIZARD

Phrynosoma cornutum



TEXAS
PARKS &
WILDLIFE

The horned lizard is popularly called a "horned toad," "horny toad," or "horned frog," although it is neither a toad nor a frog.



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Phrynosoma cornutum

The Texas horned lizard can be identified by its two large horns as well as the double row of spines along its sides. When threatened by predators it can puff itself up to appear larger, and it can squirt blood from its eyes that has a nasty smell and taste.

Populations have declined due to pesticides and imported fire ants, which eradicate harvester ant colonies, the horned lizard's principal source of food. They supplement their diet with termites, beetles and grasshoppers.

Typically horned lizards live for 6 to 8 years, although some are said to live much longer. Horned lizards are active during the spring and summer months, but during late fall they will burrow just below the surface and hibernate. The Texas horned lizard was placed on the list of threatened species in 1967, and the Texas Legislature named it our state reptile in 1993.