



# COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

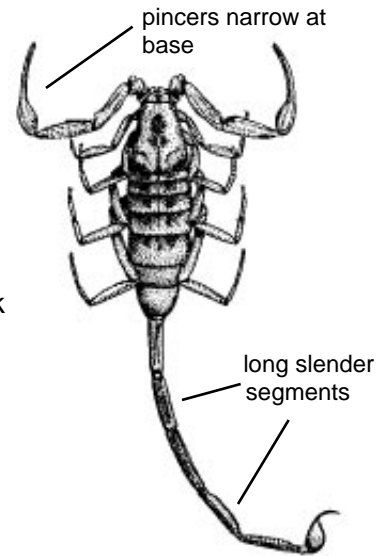
## SCORPIONS

No. 1

More About Bugs and Their Relatives Series

### 1. How dangerous are scorpions?

Although the sting of a scorpion is painful, like a bee sting it is generally not life threatening. In Arizona there is only one species of scorpion that is potentially dangerous, and that is the bark scorpion *Centruroides exilicauda*. Bark scorpions are a maximum of two inches long with a slender body and tail. The pedipalps (first pair of appendages with pincers at the ends) are long and slender. The pinchers are not as greatly swollen at the base, as they are in other species. Bark scorpions are a pale gold color and translucent.



The bark scorpion

### 2. What should I do if I am stung?

If you believe you have been stung by a bark scorpion, you should call the Arizona Poison and Drug Information Center right away at **1-800-362-0101** or your local Poison Control Center: (602) 626-6016 in Tucson and (602) 253-3334 in Phoenix.

Symptoms of a scorpion sting are an initial burning sensation, which patients have described as feeling like the injured limb has been thrust into a fire. Later numbness and tingling follow, which is reported to feel like the limb has "fallen asleep." The elderly and children are particularly susceptible, and should be observed carefully.

### 3. How do I avoid being stung?

Scorpions are normally active at night during the summer months. Always wear shoes when walking outside at night, and don't touch anything you can not see clearly. If you feel something crawling on your skin, always brush it away, NEVER SWAT! Scorpions only sting because they are threatened.

During the day scorpions seek shelter under loose boards, wood piles, rocks or bark of trees, but also may hide in man-made objects. Always look inside your shoes before putting them on in the morning. If you are camping, shake out sleeping bags and clothes before you use them. It is best to wear gloves whenever working in the yard. Bark scorpions are more likely to climb than other species, and are commonly found in trees, and on walls and ceilings.

#### 4. Why do I have scorpions in my house?

Generally scorpions prefer to be outside rather than indoors, but they may enter houses for a number of reasons. One common reason is if their feeding grounds have been disturbed by some major changes outside such as construction, or removal of trees, etc.

#### 5. Do I have “nests” of scorpions in my yard or house?

No, by and large scorpions are solitary creatures. They spend most of their lives as independent individuals, and only come together briefly to mate. They do not form “nests” the way ants or bees do. Attics are not a major source of scorpions, as many people believe, because the temperatures in an attic are too high and there isn't an adequate food supply. Bark scorpions may aggregate in “piles” of 20 to 30 during the winter under firewood or debris, but this is not considered to be a nest.

#### 6. How do I get rid of scorpions?

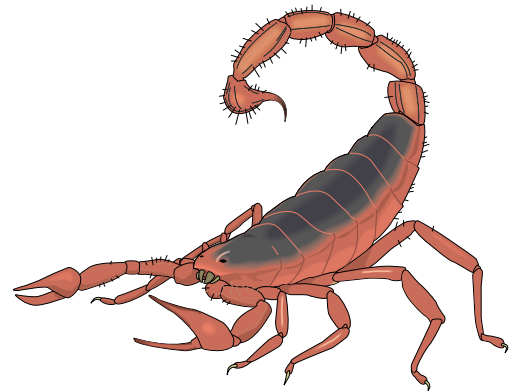
Scorpions are a natural part of the environment in Arizona, and actually are beneficial because they catch and eat many insect pests, such as crickets, and cockroaches. To discourage scorpions you may want to:

- Remove sites where scorpions can hide, such as rock or wood piles, loose boards, debris, old tires. BE SURE TO WEAR HEAVY GLOVES!**
- tighten door and window seals to keep insects and scorpions outside**
- check for other openings such as vents or holes, and cover or close them**
- have palm trees pruned and peeled regularly to 10 to 15 feet above the ground**

If these measures fail, and the scorpions pose a serious threat, chemical control may be warranted. Scorpions can be difficult to control because they hide during the day and common pesticides used for insects generally do not kill scorpions unless sprayed directly onto the animal. Indirect residual insecticides available to professionals may be somewhat effective. Some ways to reduce scorpion numbers are:

-Use insecticides to control the insects scorpions feed on (cockroaches, crickets, etc.) Hopefully they will then move on to greener pastures. Spraying the insecticide at night is even more helpful, because some scorpions may receive direct treatment.

-Obtain a black light from a lighting or novelty store or contact a pest control operator who uses black light techniques. Scorpions glow at night or in the dark when an ultraviolet light (“black light”) is shined on them. This makes it easier to locate the scorpions for direct treatment, removal, or squashing. If you are searching indoors, you should keep the light off for at least an hour to allow the scorpions to start moving around.



Homeowners may purchase various formulations of insecticides (dusts, sprays, granulars) for scorpion control at home and garden supply stores. Always read and carefully follow pesticide label instructions and store all pesticide containers out of the reach of children.

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Prepared by Dr. Dave Langston, Extension Entomology Specialist, and Roberta Gibson, Research Specialist, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, Maricopa Agricultural Center. For copies contact your local Cooperative Extension office.