

# EXPLORERS MISSION IN THE DESERT

**A Desert is a barren area of landscape where little rain occurs and living conditions are hostile for plant and animal life.**

**Your mission is to identify and locate some of our creatures here at the Reptilium that live in the desert**

## **Desert Species #1**

**I live in North Africa**

**I have a very spiky tail**

**I am a herbivore, I mainly eat plants, flowers and seeds.**

## **Desert Species #2**

**I have a very spiky tail**

**I live in Australia**

**I am an omnivore, i eat insects and smal rodents as well as carrion (dead animals)**

## **Desert Species #3**

**I also have a spiky tail!**

**I live in North America (Mexico and Texas, USA)**

**I am an insectivore this means I only eat Insects**

## **Whats with all the Spiky tails!**

**As you have just seen with these three desert dwellers, they all had one thing in common - A spiky tail!**

**Do you know why they have spiky tails? - All of these animals will hide in rock crevices when threatened usually the only part of their body left exposed would be their tail. making it unpleasant for a predator to try and catch hold of.**

## **Convergent Evolution!**

**Thats a mouthfull, what does it mean, well as we have just seen these three reptiles have evolved in different areas - North America, Australia and Africa. But these reptiles have all evolved the same defensive tactic of having a spiky tail. When two animals have evolved the same characteristics despite not being related to each other this is called convergent evolution.**