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CHAPTERS

Big Bugs, "Bad" Bugs

Adapted by
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Introduction

Bugs can be fascinating and frightening. They aren't really "bad" by nature, but they can be very dangerous. Join bug expert, Ruud "the Bugman" Kleinpaste, as he discovers why some bugs grow so big, and why some bugs should be left alone!

This scorpion packs a nasty punch, yet it is not deadly. Its cousin, the Arizona bark scorpion, is capable of killing people.



Giant Burrowing Cockroach

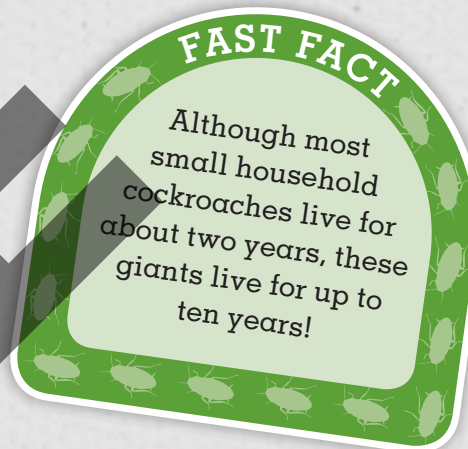
Many cockroaches live near humans, but not giant burrowing cockroaches. These critters don't ever come to town.

Giant burrowing cockroaches are only found in Queensland, Australia. They live in burrows to escape the heat. In the Australian **outback**, the temperature is often over 90° Fahrenheit (32° Celsius).



A male giant burrowing cockroach can dig through tightly **compacted** soil like a mini-**excavator**. To do this, it uses a lip above its head that looks a little like a baseball cap.

The giant burrowing cockroach uses a lip above its head to dig down deep.



Why are these cockroaches so big? It's still a bit of a **mystery**, but some scientists think it has to do with moisture. The biggest cockroaches are found where a lot of rain falls. When it rains in the Australian outback, it rains really hard! The giant burrowing cockroaches come out of their homes to **mate** and to gather food. They collect **eucalyptus** leaves and other edible materials and drag them back into their holes to eat later. These giant bugs help the **environment** by **recycling** and cleaning up dead leaves. For this reason, they are often known as "litter bugs."



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