

CHUCKWALLA
(*SAUROMALUS ATER*)

Navajo/Federal Statuses: NESL G4 / not listed under the ESA.

Distribution: Range includes southern CA and NV south through Baja Peninsula and northwestern Mexico, and east through western AZ, including the canyons of the Colorado River in northern AZ and south-central UT. Known range on Navajo Nation is not well known, but likely includes deep canyons and adjacent desertlands of Little Colorado River, Marble Canyon area (including Echo Cliffs) of Colorado River, and San Juan River in UT.

Habitat: Typical habitats are low desertlands (especially with volcanic alluvia and lava flows or desert hardpan) and rocky canyons (especially with large boulders); also use margins of grass-oak woodlands in southern UT.

Similar Species: Unique species with body size of 14-20 cm (5½-8 inches), uniform dark-colored body, and loose folds of skin on sides and neck.

Phenology: (not well known for Navajo Nation)

e.MAR-l.MAY: arousal from hibernation, territory establishment, mating

e.JUN-l.JUL: egg laying (females may lay eggs only every other year)

e.AUG-e.OCT: hatching and growth of young (adults may aestivate in summer)

e.AUG-l.FEB: beginning of inactivity period and hibernation

Survey Method: ≥1 pedestrian survey for individuals 15 APR-15 AUG, or evaluations may be based on the presence of habitat.

Avoidance: No surface disturbance within occupied habitat that could result in take of individuals or habitat alteration.

References:

Hollingsworth, B.D. 1998. The systematics of chuckwallas (*Sauromalus*) with a phylogenetic analysis of other Iguanid lizards. Herpetological Monographs, 12:38-191. (description p.136)

Johnson, S.R. 1965. An ecological study of the chuckwalla, *Sauromalus obesus*, Baird, in the western Mojave Desert. American Midland Naturalist, 73:1-29.