



## THE UNKNOWN GIANT

Everyone knows of the Komodo dragon, the largest lizard in the world, but have you heard of the Salvador monitor, also known as the Malaysian water monitor? This prehistoric throwback reaches ten feet long and weighs two hundred pounds!

These giants live along rivers and marshes in southeast Asia, where they sometimes frequent commercial fishing docks, waiting to receive discarded fish parts. This beneficial behavior keeps the waters from becoming polluted.

Black and yellow in color, sporting medieval-looking claws with teeth and jaws that lacerate like cut glass, Salvadors are actually harmless to humans if not molested. In fact, in captivity some become so gentle that they can be handled without fear of injury.

Shadrak is one such individual. We obtained him from a man who had lost his job and needed money to care for his wife and two young boys. They had raised him from a baby, about sixteen inches, showering him with kindness for three years, which allowed him to become docile toward everyone. So when the family needed money, Shadrak was the answer. By then he stretched four feet, six inches and weighed about thirty pounds, perfect for educational programs.

At present (two-and-a-half years later) Shadrak is over six feet long, weighing forty-three pounds. He acts as an ambassador of his kind in the Creature Feature Show, and frequently appears at lunch time to meet VIP Behind the Scenes guests.

Next time you're visiting, be sure to say "hi" to Shadrak and have a face-to-face with a modern day dinosaur, the unknown giant.