



The Komodo dragon uses its long forked tongue to "smell" the air.

dragons and smaller lizards is a long forked tongue. It uses its tongue to "smell" the air. If the wind is right, it can smell a dead animal up to 5 miles (8.5 kilometers) away.

The Komodo dragon cannot breathe fire, but its mouth contains a different weapon. Its bite is poisonous. This causes **fatal** infections in any prey that manages to escape. The Komodo dragon then tracks down the poisoned animal.

There are 3,000-5,000 wild Komodo dragons living at any one time, all on volcanic islands in **Indonesia**. They are named for the largest of these islands, Komodo.

According to fossil evidence, these **creatures** originated 25 to 40 million years ago. But the Komodo dragon was unknown to most of the world until about 100 years ago. Then some Dutch **soldiers** had a run-in with one and sent its photograph to a nearby zoo.

Now the world knows that there really are dragons.



Indonesia is made up of thousands of islands.

A Modern-Day Dragon

KEY VOCABULARY

- **Komodo** (proper noun) *Komodo* is the name of a large island in Indonesia and a lizard that gets its name from the island.
- **arrangement** (noun) An *arrangement* is the way things are positioned.
- **fatal** (adjective) *Fatal* means causing something to die.
- **Indonesia** (proper noun) *Indonesia* is the name of a country.
- **creatures** (noun) A *creature* is an animal or other being.
- **soldiers** (noun) A *soldier* is a person who serves in an army.

Where do Komodo dragons live?

Explain how Komodo dragons hunt for food.

Insert a photo of a Komodi dragon with body parts labeled (google image)

How are Komodo dragons different from dragons in fairy tales?

Would you want a Kimodo dragon as a pet? Why or why not?

