

# Digestive System of Uromastix- 1

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The digestive system of Uromastix exhibits a number of unique features like all other lizards. The digestive system includes the alimentary canal and digestive glands.

## **Alimentary Canal:**

The alimentary canal of Uromastix is a long and convoluted tube. It can be divided into mouth, buccal cavity, pharynx, oesophagus, stomach, duodenum, ileum or small intestine, colon, rectum or large intestine, cloaca.

### **1. Mouth:**

The mouth opening is fairly a wide gape bounded by the upper and lower immovable and muscular lips. Both the lips are covered with horny scales. The sharp edge of upper lip covers the rounded edge of lower lip. The mouth opens into the buccal cavity.

### **2. Buccal Cavity:**

It is narrow in front and broad towards the posterior side. It is lined with mucous membrane and contains tongue, internal nares and teeth over the jaws. The mucous membrane of the buccal cavity possesses the mucous glands in four groups.

### **Tongue:**

The buccal cavity has a well developed muscular tongue on its floor. It is attached to the floor of the buccal cavity along the median ventral line. The tongue is long, anteriorly bifid and protrusible. Its broad posterior end is fixed and also bifid. The tongue bears the voluntary muscles, taste buds and mucous glands. Taste buds are present over the glandular papillae found in the mid-dorsal groove.

**Teeth:** Teeth are arranged over the premaxillae and maxillae of the upper jaw and dentaries of the lower jaw. The teeth are small,

conical and acrodont, i.e., they are attached to the outer borders of the bones of jaws. The palate bears no teeth.

### 3. Pharynx:

The buccal cavity is continuous with the pharynx. The pharynx lies posterior to the tongue. The mucous lining of the pharynx is thrown into longitudinal folds. The floor of pharynx contains a median longitudinal slit called the glottis leading into trachea. It is present in between the posterior bifurcation of the tongue. Near the jaw angles are present rounded apertures of eustachian tubes, one on either side. Pharynx leads posteriorly into the oesophagus through a wide gullet. It only opens when food is swallowed.

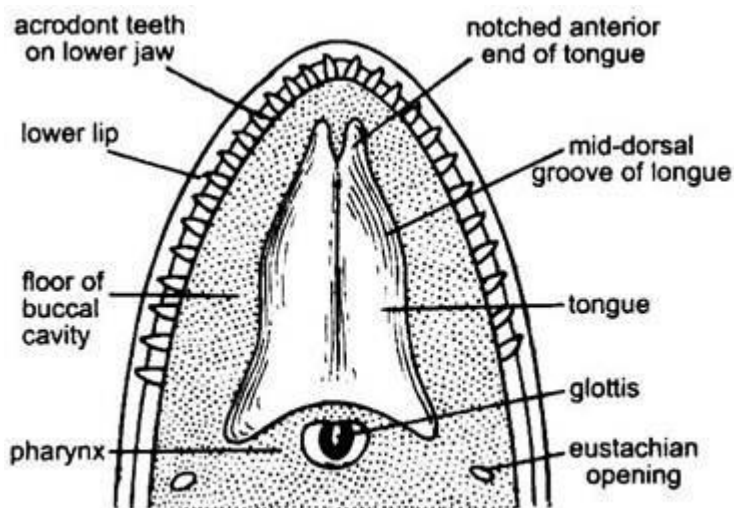


Fig. 21.18. *Uromastix*. Floor of buccal cavity.

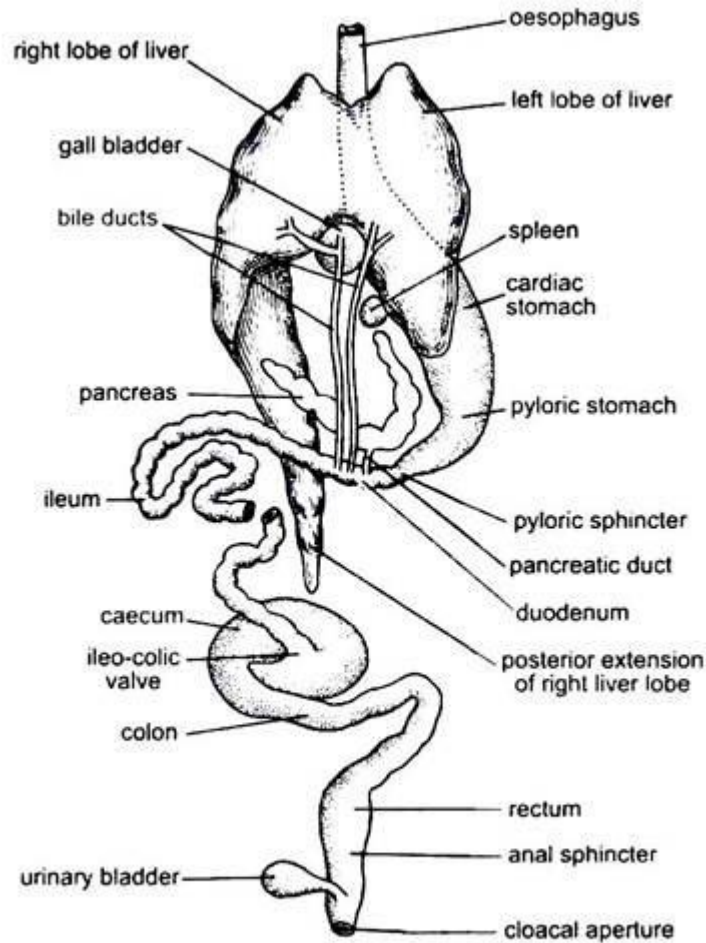
### 4. Oesophagus:

The oesophagus is a long, narrow, straight cylindrical muscular tube. It is capable of distension at the time of food swallowing. There are numerous longitudinal folds present on the entire inner surface of the oesophagus. It leads into the wide cylindrical stomach through long neck.

### 5. Stomach:

The stomach is a long cylindrical sac-like structure, wider than the oesophagus. It has thick muscular walls and lies in the left half of the body and is roughly U-shaped. The stomach is suspended in the body cavity by a fold of peritoneum called the mesogaster.

The stomach is differentiated into two parts- anterior part is known as cardiac stomach which lies dorsal to the left lobe of the liver, and the posterior part is known as pyloric stomach which lies slightly to the right side. The liver is attached to the stomach by a thin fold of



**Fig. 21.19.** *Uromastix*. Alimentary canal and digestive glands.

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