

## **Bedouin Paths Ltd**

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Quite frankly, being a young Bedouin (especially if you are male) is a tiresome business. Before you are 6 months old you must endure several rituals, most of which (in fact come to think of it, *all* of which) are extremely discomforting and probably illegal in most countries.

The mountains and deserts of southern Sinai are stunningly beautiful, but also contain nasty inhabitants known as scorpions. Since the Bedouin do not wish to be troubled by having to cut off various limbs to save them from a painful death in the event of being bitten, they have devised a simple solution.

Their dear mother takes said scorpion and cooks him over a fire. Once cooked, the scorpion is mashed into a paste (along with the scorpions sting) and spread over the mother's breast. You, young Mr Bedouin, desiring a breast feed happily suckles away at the combination of mothers milk and mashed scorpion. The result is that you go very hot for around 3 days and feel distinctly ill.

However, now that you have consumed the scorpions ill-will you are deemed protected for life from another attack. One Bedouin guide I know has been bitten over ten times and claims no side affects. I have no idea whether this is medically condoned but the Bedouin are happy to go along with it. What they are also happy to go along with is the shortening of the dingly-dangly-thing.

What is the dingly-dangly thing I hear you ask? And no it's not the treasured male protrusion in case you were wondering. It is known medically as the Uvula and it is the strange little dangly thing that hangs down from the top of the back of the mouth, just before the throat starts. Personally I prefer dingly-dangly-thing to uvula since that is exactly what it is; well at least until the Bedouin get hold of it.

Bedouins pride themselves on never getting thirsty and being able to take hikers through the heat of the summer deserts without needing a drink, especially during Ramadam. They will go for days without water (taking only an occasional tea) and then will complain of headaches that remind them they need to rehydrate.

The reason for this ability to withstand lack of water is that when they are young they have their little dingly-dangly-thing shortened. Yeah, shortened.

Basically the bottom bulbous head of the uvula is cut off (ouch), and this apparently stops them from getting thirsty. It is worth noting that it is a known fact that when someone is dehydrating, the uvula expands and can cause breathing problems since it expands into the throat and causes a degree of asphyxia. So now you know.

No next time you come and join us in the mountains and deserts of south Sinai, you will be happy to know that whatever happens, your Bedouin Guide will remain impervious to the effect of lack of water and scorpion bites; whereas you and I will take lots of bottled water and tread very carefully.



Bedouin Paths runs ethical hiking tours in Sinai and is looking for a Sales & Marketing Manager to be based in Cairo. If you are a fluent Arabic speaker with Sales and Marketing experience, please send your details to [jobs@bedouinpaths.com](mailto:jobs@bedouinpaths.com) or [mark@bedouinpaths.com](mailto:mark@bedouinpaths.com) or go to [www.bedouinpaths.com](http://www.bedouinpaths.com) for more information.