

Venomous Snakes



WESTERN DIAMONDBACK RATTLESNAKE

A gray and brown snake with the diamonds being a darker brown. The tail has broad black and white rings just before the rattle. Adults average 3 to 4 feet. These snakes prefer to avoid places with human activity, but if food or water is scarce, they will forage for them anywhere.

They primarily eat rodents and birds found on the ground.



TEXAS CORAL SNAKE

This snake has red, yellow and black bands encircling the body, with the red touching the yellow. It is a slender snake averaging 2 feet in length. Although venomous, these snakes have a hard time injecting venom into a human because of their small head and short, fixed fangs. Bites usually occur only on the hand on or between the fingers. The snake has to chew in order to inject the venom. Most people do not let them hang on for long enough to do serious damage. These snakes feed mainly upon other snakes and sometimes lizards, so they are attracted to areas with timbers or flagstone.



CANEBRAKE RATTLESNAKE

Also known as a *Timber Rattlesnake*, they are generally found in Central and Eastern Texas piney woods. This is an endangered species protected in Texas. These snakes average 3-4 feet in length. The snakes background color is usually a shade of gray, tan or brown. On the snakes back are dark chevrons or V-shaped bands. An orange stripe of varying shades and width runs from head to tail sometimes fading in the last third portion of the snake. The tail is black or dark brown. They are a mild mannered snake with potent venom.



WESTERN COTTONMOUTH

This is a heavy-bodied snake averaging 2-3 feet in length. Adult coloration can be almost all black, with a little brown, or they can appear as black and brown banded. The juvenile pattern is much more pronounced with the tip of the tail a greenish yellow. This snake isn't generally found in Austin. Can often be mistaken for a water snake. The Cottonmouth likes slow moving water or quiet ponds without a lot of human activity. They feed on frogs, fish, rodents and birds. They like to sit very still and blend into their surroundings. If bothered, they will first try to get away, but if cornered they will be aggressive and show their characteristic white mouth.



BROAD-BANDED COPPERHEAD

This snake gets to be 2-3 feet long. It is generally not found in Austin, but have been seen in Elgin and Bastrop. These snakes have broad bands in alternating colors of copper and light tan. The juveniles have greenish yellow tips to their tails, which fades as they get older. These snakes feed on rodents, birds and amphibians.



NON-Venomous Snakes

TEXAS RAT SNAKE

This is the most common large snake in the Austin area. It is often incorrectly called a *chicken snake*. The snake will **vibrate its tail**, and depending on what the tail is hitting against may make a sound that will make you think you are dealing with a Rattlesnake, even though they have no rattle! While the juveniles are colored with brown blotches on a gray background, the adult's dark gray to black blotches will be on a red, orange, yellow or even white background, giving the snake a wide range of possible color combinations. The adults are from 4-6 feet long, These snakes will eat any kind of rodent, birds and bird eggs. They are excellent climbers and will go into attics and under homes in search of prey. They are very aggressive when cornered or captured. These snakes are constrictors, but not venomous.



GARTER & RIBBON SNAKES

Depending on the species, the stripes can number from one to several, with **the stripe color either red, yellow or orange**. These snakes are usually found near a permanent water source because their main diet consists of fish and frogs. They may be attracted to backyard fishponds if the fish are small enough to be prey. The adult snake averages two feet in length.

BULLSNAKE

These are large snakes, averaging 4 to 6 feet in length when mature. They have brown blotches that are almost square, on a background of light brown to almost yellow in some cases. This snake is capable of hissing very loudly and they constrict their prey, which consists mostly of rodents and birds.



TEXAS PATCHNOSE SNAKE

A long and slender snake with yellow and black stripes. They eat lizards, snakes and occasionally rodents. Adults average 3 feet in length.

DIAMONDBACK WATER SNAKE

This is a harmless snake often confused with the venomous Western Cottonmouth because it is found close to or in water. It has a greenish background with a dark diamond pattern on its back. It also has dark green squares on its side and a yellow belly. It is common to many of the waterways and ponds in the Austin area. Adults average 3 feet long and feed primarily on fish and frogs. These snakes are very shy and will quickly attempt to escape if startled or approached. Water is their preferred escape route and sanctuary.



TEXAS BROWN SNAKE

Adults and young have reddish brown colored bodies with dark brown spots around the eyes. Adults average 12 inches in length. They feed primarily on slugs and earthworms. They can be found in moist flower beds, gardens and moist woodlands.

TEXAS LINED SNAKE

The adult averages only about one foot long. It has a pale stripe on a very dark background with a faint row of spots on either side of the stripe. A very common snake, usually found hiding under rocks, logs and landscape materials. They feed on earthworms and sow bugs.



WESTERN COACHWHIP

This is a large, slender snake averaging 4-6 feet long. They range in color from solid brown or tan to wide brown and tan bands. They can move very quickly and feed on reptiles, rodents and birds. If cornered they can raise the front one-third of their bodies off the ground and will bite, though not venomous. They will also 'play dead' sometimes.