

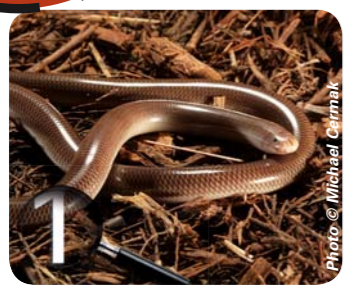
MOST SNAKES CAN SWALLOW PREY MUCH LARGER THAN THEIR OWN HEADS.

Australian snakes

Not including sea snakes, Australia is home to more than 100 species of snakes in five families: Typhlopidae (blind snakes), Acrochordidae (file snakes), Boidae (pythons), Colubridae and Elapidae (venomous land snakes). All Australian snakes capture live prey, ranging from insects to fish, frogs, reptiles, birds and small- to medium-sized mammals. Snakes occur in all parts of Australia, with a greater diversity in warmer tropical or sub-tropical regions.

LEARN MORE

Spectacular Snakes of Australia, M Cermak, 2008
A Complete Guide to Reptiles of Australia, S. Wilson & G. Swan, 2008
Australian Snakes: A Natural History, R. Shine, 1991
 Periodicals: *Reptiles Australia*, *Scales & Tails*
www.reptilepark.com.au/animals.asp?catID=16



North-eastern blind snake

Ramphotyphlops polygrammicus (Typhlopidae)

About 40cm. Head and body covered with uniform, very hard, smooth, glossy scales; eyes are small dark spots under head scales. Short, blunt, spiked tail. Non-venomous.



Wooded regions of north-eastern QLD coast

STATUS
Common

SOME ESSENTIALS

Lives underground in soil cavities in ant and termite nests, under leaf litter and humus. Occasionally emerges at night, usually after rain. Feeds on termites and ant eggs, larvae and pupae.

DID YOU KNOW?

Only insectivorous snakes in Australia. They push their shovel-like head through the soil to burrow while using their tail spike as an anchor.

LEND A HAND

These small, underground reptiles are easily overlooked and sensitive to soil disturbance. Take extra care anywhere near their distribution areas.



Little file snake

Acrochordus granulatus (Acrochordidae)

50-71cm. Thin, loose, rough-textured skin. Smaller of the two Australian file snake species. Non-venomous.



Coastal NT and eastern northern QLD, mainly in brackish water in estuaries. Occasionally travel into fresh water, particularly during the wet season.

STATUS
Not threatened

SOME ESSENTIALS

Entirely aquatic, but air-breathing, so will surface periodically.

DID YOU KNOW?

This fish-eating snake uses its rough skin to help with underwater constriction of its prey. Females ambush prey and males forage.

LEND A HAND

Encourage and contribute to the conservation of marine and estuarine habitats.



Green python

Morelia viridis (Boidae)

1.8-2.1m, slender, non-venomous.



New Guinea, West Papua and some nearby islands plus a small patch of rainforest in the Iron and MacIlwraith Ranges of Cape York, QLD.

STATUS
Rare (in Australia)

SOME ESSENTIALS

Strictly nocturnal. Ambush predator – waits for small mammal or bird to move within striking range then uses extra-long, curved teeth to grab and pull animal upwards into the air before constricting.

DID YOU KNOW?

Hatchlings are bright yellow with brown markings (Australian) or red (some PNG & Indonesian populations), changing to adult green at seven to 12 months. This colour change, known to occur only in one other Boidae species, the emerald boa of South America, is an example of convergent evolution.

LEND A HAND

This species' limited Australian distribution is all within national park lands. Join the National Parks Association to help maintain vitally important healthy, intact rainforest habitat.



Common tree snake

Dendrelaphis punctulatus (Colubridae)

To 1.2m, occasionally longer. Slim elegant, arboreal and, depending on region, olive green, brownish, black, blue or grey with yellow or cream underbelly and throat. Non-venomous.



Wet and dry sclerophyll forests, rainforests, woodlands and vine forests along northern Australia from the Kimberley region to Cape York and Torres Strait Islands to north-eastern NSW.

STATUS
Common

SOME ESSENTIALS

Quick-moving, hunts by sight, forages by day for frogs and small lizards.

DID YOU KNOW?

Lives primarily in canopy. Will descend to pursue lizards. Survives in parks and gardens. If threatened, will produce a horrible odour, inflate its neck, flick its tongue and hiss loudly.

LEND A HAND

Keep a pesticide-free, snake-friendly garden with water and layered vegetation. Encourage pets and children to leave snakes alone.



Eastern brown snake

Pseudonaja textilis (Elapidae)

To 1.5m, rarely exceeding 2m. The dorsal colours range from beige, brown, through to black, usually uniform but sometimes with darker or lighter specks. The belly is yellow with orange blotches. Extremely venomous.



Open grasslands, pastures and woodlands of eastern Australia, from desert to coast.

STATUS
Common

SOME ESSENTIALS

Feeds naturally on small mammals; has adapted well to agricultural and other areas where prey such as rats and mice are abundant. Shelters include abandoned burrows, hollow logs and other ground-level protection.

DID YOU KNOW?

The venom is second in toxicity only to that of the inland taipan.

LEND A HAND

All snake species are ecologically important and should be treated with respect. This species is dangerously venomous and easily provoked. Be extremely cautious in its territory, avoid encounters and contact a licensed snake handler if removal is advisable.



Eastern tiger snake

Notechis scutatus scutatus (Elapidae)

To 2.1m. Blunt head, solid body. Colour varies by region and habitat: olive, yellow, orange-brown, with lighter yellow, grey or orange underbelly. Often banded like a tiger. Extremely venomous.



Coastal environments, along creeks and wetlands from southern Queensland to eastern South Australia.

STATUS
Not threatened

SOME ESSENTIALS

Eats a wide variety of small vertebrates which it kills with a venomous bite.

DID YOU KNOW?

Not aggressive, but if threatened, the snake will flatten its body and lift and thrash its head from side to side while hissing loudly.

LEND A HAND

Do not use rodenticides if possible. They not only kill rodents, they kill the snakes that prey on rodents and the birds that prey on those snakes.