

Move safely in snake country

Slow down and be aware of your surroundings. Admire the plants, wildlife, and landscape. Notice tiny beetles or baby lizards who might have been run over by a less-aware, fast-moving visitor.

Use a flashlight or lantern.

Stay on the trail if possible.

Look before placing your hands and feet. If you can't see, use a long stick to disturb vegetation and hidden animals.

If you can't see who's there, it's not a safe place for your hands or feet.

Avoid or move cautiously near areas preferred by snakes: rock outcrops, downed trees and logs, water's edge, bases of shrubs, shady areas when it's hot, and sunny areas when it's cold.

Respect warning signals. Rattling or hissing means "I'm afraid of you." If you hear it, give the sound a wide berth.

Keep an eye on kids and pets

Train your pets and teach your kids to respect and keep a safe distance from snakes.

Don't let pets or children roam unsupervised until you're sure they know how to move safely in snake country.



Lula keeps a safe distance from an Arizona Black Rattlesnake.



A curious Striped Whipsnake.

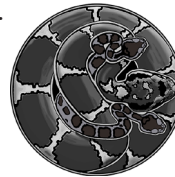
Snakes have an undeserved reputation as evil, cold-blooded creatures. Fear and misunderstanding result in merciless persecution and impede snake conservation efforts.

We envision a world where snakes are respected & appreciated instead of feared and hated.

Advocates for Snake Preservation *changes how people view & treat snakes*

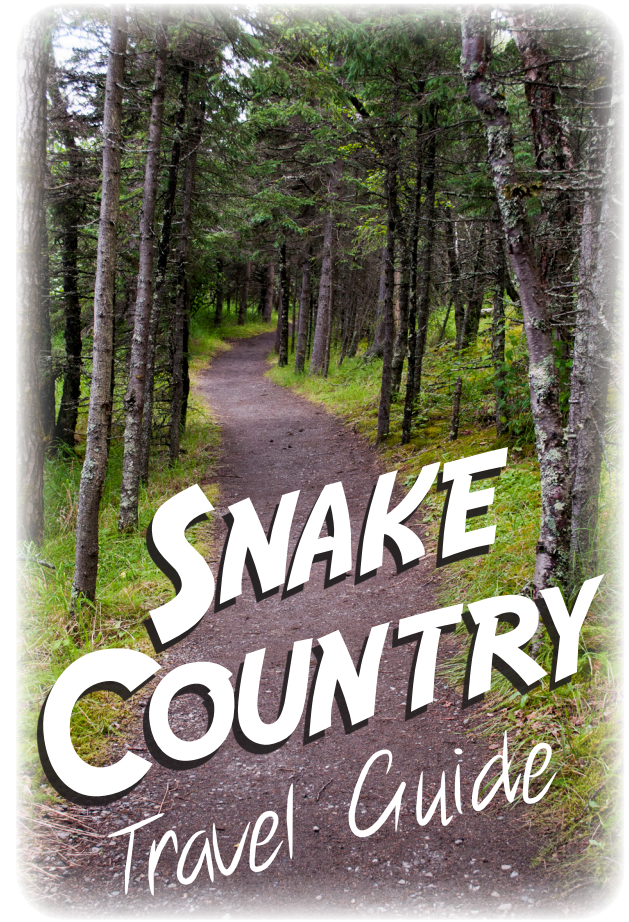
We study snake behavior and natural history, following the principles of Compassionate Conservation.

We dispel myths and misinformation about snakes through free presentations, online outreach, and publications.



We provide resources on how we can peacefully coexist with our snake neighbors. **Find out more at:**

LivingWithSnakes.org
info@snakes.ngo • www.snakes.ngo
PO Box 2752, Silver City, NM 88062



Photograph courtesy of Autumn Hostetler.

Worried about snakes during your outdoor adventures?

Respecting local wildlife is an important part of responsible outdoor recreation. ***Remember, we're visitors in their home.***

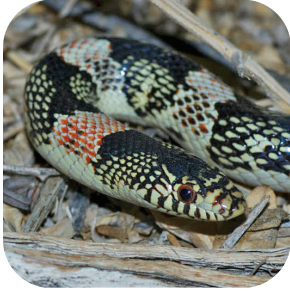
Learn to hike, bike, climb, and camp safely in snake country and appreciate *all* of your wildlife encounters.

Killing or handling snakes is a good way to get bit

Most bites happen to people who try to handle or kill snakes; the rest are due to people not watching where they put their hands or feet.

Once you spot a snake, the risk of a bite is virtually zero since you can keep a safe distance.

Snakes presumed dead can and do bite.



A timid Long-Nosed Snake.

Shooting snakes can result in accidentally shooting people because long, low snakes are easy to miss.

If wildlife is protected where you're recreating, that includes snakes. *Handling and killing them is likely prohibited.*

If you find a venomous snake

Wait for him to move, or

Walk around, carefully, in case there are other snakes nearby.

If someone is bitten by a venomous snake

Seek medical attention immediately. The only effective treatment for snakebite is antivenom, so don't waste your time with snakebite kits or other home remedies.

Learn local wildlife's habits and avoid their places or observe from a safe distance

You could see snakes:

- Courting & mating;
- Snoozing together in the sun;
- Wrestling & sparring over potential mates;
- Drinking rainwater (or snow!) as it falls on their coils;
- Taking care of their kids or babysitting their neighbors' kids.



Male Panamint Rattlesnakes sparring over a female.



A male Gophersnake courting a female.

If you find a venomous snake in a high-traffic area (trail, parking lot, campground, handholds):

- Wait for him to move, or
- Use a long stick or hiking pole to gently encourage him to move, and
- Stay with the snake until he's moved out of the way, if possible, so you can warn others to keep their distance.

Snakes are important predators *and* prey

Their presence indicates a healthy and productive ecosystem.

Many animals depend on snakes for food, including birds (raptors, owls, roadrunners), mammals (foxes, badgers, coyotes), and other reptiles. Kingsnakes, Racers, and some other snakes eat venomous snakes.



A California Kingsnake eating a Tiger Rattlesnake.

More snakes = less disease! Snakes eat vectors and carriers of many diseases, including the plague and Lyme disease.



A Western Patch-nosed Snake hunting Whiptail Lizards.

Snakes are important predators of mammals, birds, amphibians, insects, and reptiles (even other snakes). And due to their non-competitive nature and ability to fast for long periods, vipers (rattlesnakes, copperheads, cottonmouths) control prey populations more effectively than bird or mammal predators.