

Snakes in Georgia

A large snake with a dark, patterned body and a lighter, speckled head, coiled in a bed of dry pine needles. The snake's body is covered in a complex pattern of dark spots and bands, while its head is lighter with a distinct pattern of dark spots. The snake is positioned in the center of the frame, with its head facing towards the right. The background is a dense layer of dry, golden-brown pine needles, creating a textured and natural setting for the snake.

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Herpetology

Reptiles

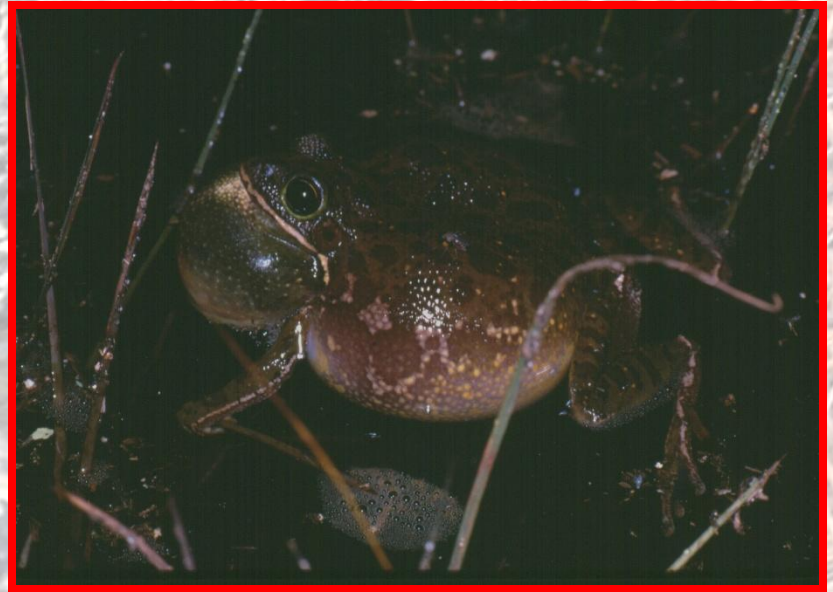
Alligator
Turtle
Lizard
Snake

Amphibians

Frog
Toad
Salamander
Siren



Frogs and Toads



Frogs and toads collectively make up the anuran group of amphibians, and are the most commonly seen representatives of amphibians.

Salamanders and Siren



Salamanders and sirens are often lumped together by many herpetologists. True salamanders have 4 legs, while sirens only have forelegs. Sirens generally sport large, feathery external gills, while most salamanders only possess gills during their larval stages.

Alligators



The alligator is our largest terrestrial/freshwater reptile. Adult males often surpass 12 feet in length and may weight several hundred pounds, although females generally are between 6 and 8 feet in length. Unlike most reptiles, alligators are vocal, and females defend their nests and hatchlings.

Turtles



Turtles are among some of the oldest reptiles in world, and are found in freshwater, marine, and terrestrial habitats.

Lizards and Snakes



Lizards and snakes are closely related and usually can be separated by the presence or lack of legs. However, glass lizards are examples of legless lizards. Lizards possess moveable eyelids, ears, and have the ability to break off their tails easily which later regenerate.

Lizards and Snakes



Lizards also have the ability to break off their tails easily which later regenerate.

Snakes (Serpentes)

- ~ Colubrids (includes all our harmless varieties)
- ~ Vipers (includes rattlesnakes, cottonmouth, & copperhead)
- ~ Elapids (the cobra group, represented by the coral snake)



Snakes (Feeding Strategies)

- ↗ Over-power
- ↗ Constriction
- ↗ Venom



Harmless Snakes: Water Snakes



Water snakes are widespread in Georgia, and several species are found in the state. The most common water snakes are the *fasciata* group in the southern part of the state and the *sipedon* group in the northern portion of the state.

Harmless Snakes: Water Snakes



The brown water snake and red bellied water snake are often killed for cottonmouths.

Harmless Snakes: aquatic Snakes



The glossy water snake and queen snake are related species that feed primarily on crayfish

Harmless Snakes: aquatic Snakes



The black swamp snake and striped swamp snake are found in southern Georgia, but are very secretive snakes not often seen in the open.

Harmless Snakes: Mud and Rainbow Snakes



Rainbow and mud snakes are fairly large, handsome snakes that are specialized feeders. Mud snakes primarily feed on sirens, while rainbow snakes feed on eels.

Harmless Snakes: Garter Snakes



Garter snakes are found throughout the state, and feed mostly on frogs, toads, and fish. Juveniles also eat earthworms.

Harmless Snakes: Ribbon Snakes



Ribbon snakes are thinner cousins to the garter snake. Like garter snakes they are often found near water.

Harmless Snakes: Crowned Snakes and Pinewoods Snakes



The southeastern crowned snake is a reared-fanged snake that may have a weak venom used to subdue centipedes and other invertebrates. The pinewoods snake is another small species of snake that feeds small lizards, frogs, and salamanders. These snakes are generally less than 12 inches in length as adults.

Harmless Snakes: Ringneck Snakes



The ringneck is a common, secretive snake found throughout the state. Individuals tend to be slate gray or black with a narrow ring just behind the head, but have colorful bellies.

Harmless Snakes: Rough Green Snakes



Green snakes feed on insects, they are particularly fond of caterpillars. They are excellent climbers and are often found off the ground.

Harmless Snakes: Eastern King Snakes



The eastern king snake is a large constrictor, best known for eating other snakes (including venomous varieties). They have a natural immunity to the venom of rattlesnakes, cottonmouths, and copperheads.

Harmless Snakes: Scarlet King Snake and Scarlet Snake



The scarlet king snake is a small snake that along with the scarlet snake, resemble the venomous coral snake. Unlike the coral snake these harmless varieties have their red bands bordered by black.

Harmless Snakes: Black Racer



The black racer is usually referred to as a black snake. Juveniles however display a blotchy pattern for the first year or two of their lives.

Harmless Snakes: Coachwhip



Closely related to the black racer is coachwhip snake. Adults resemble braided whips to a degree and reportedly whip people to death! Juveniles like racers display a slight pattern for the first year or two of their lives.

Harmless Snakes: Corn Snake



Corn snakes are members of the rat snake group. Adults are brightly colored in shades of red and orange, although black forms have been found in Georgia and Florida. The belly pattern is black and white checker board.

Harmless Snakes: Rat Snakes



Rat snakes vary in type by locality. North Georgia has black rat snakes, west Georgia has gray, and coastal Georgia has yellow.

Harmless Snakes: Hognose Snakes



The hognose snake is unique in that individuals will give the appearance of a cobra when first approached, but when this fails, it will roll over and play dead.

Harmless Snakes: Hognose Snakes



There are two species of hognose snakes found in the state. The eastern hognose comes in a variety of color phases, including a completely black, “melanistic” phase, the southern hognose displays a dark blotchy pattern with a gray or reddish brown background.

Harmless Snakes: Indigo Snake



The indigo snake is the largest native snake to the United States with individuals approaching 8 feet in length. It is confined to southern Georgia usually in areas that support gopher tortoises, whose burrow it often uses for shelter. It is federally protected as a threatened species.

Venomous Snakes: Coral Snakes



The coral snake is a member of the cobra family. It has a neurotoxic venom, unlike our other venomous snakes. It resembles a couple varieties of harmless snakes, but has a black head and the red bands are surrounded by yellow bands.

Venomous Snakes: Copperheads



The copperhead is the probably are most common venomous variety of snake state-wide, although it is curiously absent from the southeastern corner of the state.

Venomous Snakes: Cottonmouths



The cottonmouth or water moccasin is closely related to the copperhead. Although it is primarily a fish eater, it will feed on a variety of other animals, including frogs, other snakes, and small mammals.

Venomous Snakes: Rattlesnakes



The pigmy rattlesnake is our smallest rattlesnake, usually under 20 inches as an adult. They are often referred to as ground rattlesnakes, and because of their cryptic coloration are probably overlooked by most individuals.

Venomous Snakes: Rattlesnakes



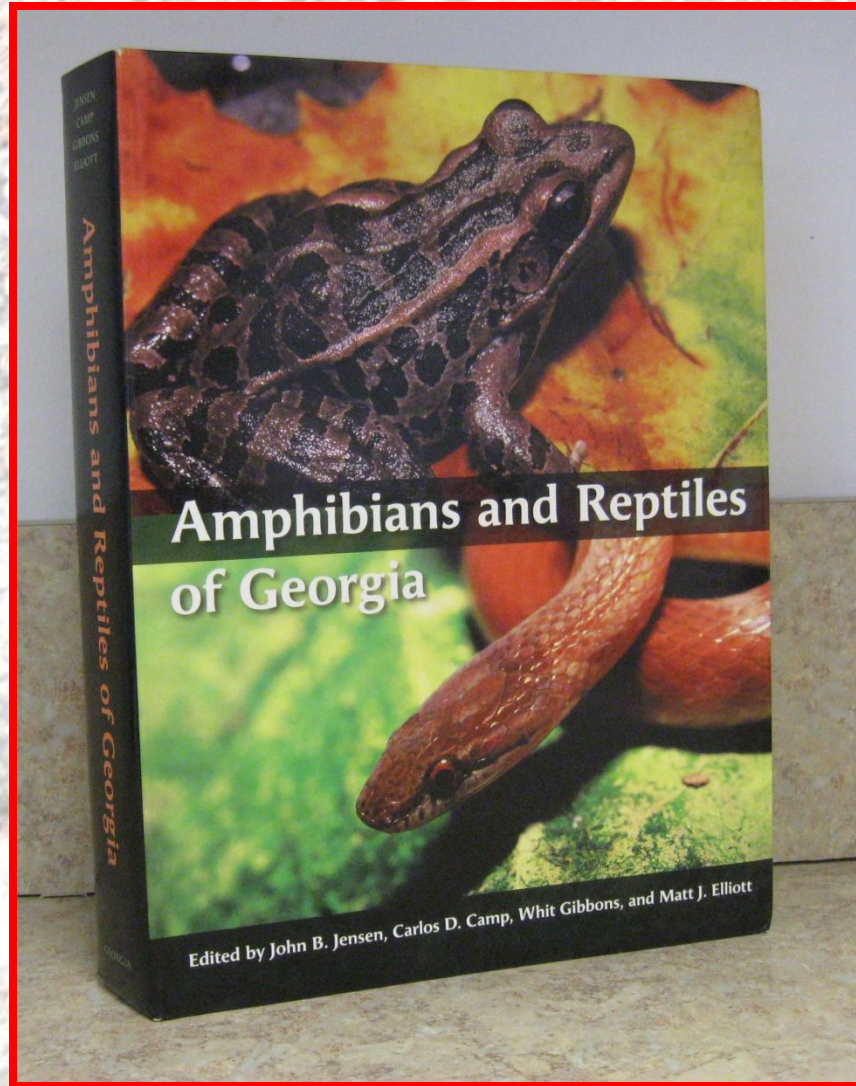
The canebrake or timber rattlesnake at one time was considered two separate subspecies of snakes. Individuals from northern parts of Georgia (timber) are smaller than their southern counterparts (canebrake), and often display a blotchy pattern, rather than a series of chevron-shaped cross bands.

Venomous Snakes: Rattlesnakes



The eastern diamondback rattlesnake is restricted to the Coastal Plain region of the state, and is usually associated with sandy, well-drained upland habitat, although sizable populations exist on many of our barrier islands and salt-marsh hammocks.

If you want to learn more.....





Thank You