

SNAKE TYPES:

Eastern Brown: *Pseudonaja textilis*:



The Eastern Brown Snake is an Elapid native to Eastern Australia. They have been known to grow up to 2.4 m long but most commonly around the 1.5m mark. The northern variety tend to get larger than our southern ones. They are most commonly brown or a shade of grey, but have been known



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to be jet black as well. The Eastern Brown Snake is found in most habitats except dense forests. Its main source of food is the house mouse, so with the ever-growing amount of farm land and urban sprawl, they are being spotted more regularly around our country towns and cities such as Ballarat, Ararat, Maryborough, Bendigo, Beaufort, Skipton, Avoca, Elmhurst, Stawell, Glenlofty, Warrak, Buangor, Ballan, Daylesford, Hepburn Springs, Clunes, Talbot, Lexton, Snake Valley, Creswick, Miners Rest, Redbank, Stuart Mill, St Arnaud, Laanecoorie and other places that are being more heavily developed.

The Eastern Brown Snake is the world's second-most venomous land snake after the [Inland Taipan](#) (also native to Australia but not to our region). It is responsible for 60% of [snake-bite deaths in Australia](#). It also has smaller fangs than other Australian Venomous snakes.

Juveniles can vary in markings, but generally have a black head, with a lighter brown body. They can sometimes be mistaken for whip snakes that are a small snake in Victoria which are a light brown with a black head

Large eastern brown snakes are often confused with Mulga Snakes, whose habitat they share in many areas, but may be distinguished by their smaller heads

The Eastern Brown Snake is found along the east coast of Australia, from far north Queensland, all the way down to the Mornington Peninsular at the bottom of Victoria. The Eastern Brown Snake has a large variety of habitats, ranging from dry Eucalypt forests like the ones found around the Grampians and Pyrenees Ranges, to woodlands, grass and scrublands and open fields and farmland. Their diet is mainly rodents so are less common around rainforests, but they do also eat small birds and other reptiles like Skinks. They commonly find shelter around rocks, logs, burrows and can be found under piles of building materials such as roofing tin and firewood.

The eastern brown snake is solitary, Even after the babies are born the mother generally will leave them to fend for themselves. Snakes don't generally have maternal instincts. Like other snakes they are mostly active during the day. But in the peak of summer when the temperature can get as high as mid 40's they may actually come out during the evening, to prevent themselves from overheating. They can even be seen in the late autumn and winter seasons if the weather is kind. They have been seen in temperatures as low as 14 °C, as long as the sun is out.

Eastern brown snakes generally mate from early October through to the end of spring, just when they are coming out of their Brumation. The eggs are laid in a sheltered, warm location such as a rabbit burrow or tree stump. Depending on the temperature and humidity the eggs can hatch anywhere from 95days to just 36 days.



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Tiger Snake: *Notechis scutatus*:



The Tiger Snake is a highly venomous Snake Found in the southern States of Australia. It can also be found on the offshore islands like Tasmania. Their appearance can change dramatically from snake to snake. Some have a vivid Black and yellow stripe pattern, others can be jet black, others can be brown. Because of this, at a glance they can be mistaken for other species of snake. Their colour and patterns can also change seasonally as well. Tiger Snakes are typically around the 1.2m Length. Tiger



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Snakes can be more tolerant of colder weather so are normally the first to be spotted come spring time. Tiger Snakes are common around coastal areas but also thrive around wetlands and creeks.

Because Tiger Snakes live around more water prone areas as opposed to the eastern Brown snake, their diet contains other reptiles and amphibians such as Frogs, Skinks, birds and can sometimes even practice a bit of Cannibalism.

Tiger snakes also don't lay eggs. A Female Tiger Snake will give birth to live young, 20 – 30 babies during summer.



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Copper Head: *Austrelaps labialis*:



Similar to the Tiger Snake is the Copperhead. They also have adapted to thrive in the colder climates surrounding places like Ballarat, Ararat, Maryborough, Bendigo, Beaufort, Skipton, Avoca, Elmhurst, Stawell, Glenlofty, Warrak, Buangor, Ballan, Daylesford, Hepburn Springs, Clunes, Talbot, Lexton, Snake Valley, Creswick, Miners Rest, Redbank, Stuart Mill, St Arnaud, Ianecoorie. All Copperheads are fairly similar in their appearance, a black or dark grey top of their body with an orange or gold,



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sometimes cream underbelly. They are fairly stocky and muscular in their build compared to other Snakes found in the area which can be fairly slender in appearance. There are three common species of Copperhead in Australia. The Pygmy, Highland and Lowland Copperheads. Since only the lowland Copperhead are found around the Ballarat, Ararat, Maryborough, Pyrenees and Grampians area I will only cover information on them. But they do have common features with each other.

They generally like to inhabit grassland and open scrub, they tend to stay close to a water supply like a creek or a dam. They like to shelter around rocks and fallen trees, but are not opposed to making homes in places humans create like compost bins, piles of firewood and under roofing iron and piles of tires. They can start becoming active as the weather starts to warm up around August and they start to disappear towards May for the winter. But on a warm winter's day they can be seen basking in the sun.

Copperheads also don't lay eggs, they are live bearing snakes. And like other snakes they have very little to no maternal instincts. This means that the babies are able to fend for themselves from day one. The babies are normally born around the middle of summer and each mum can have 2 – 10 babies

Copperheads are also prone to have ticks, this is also a common occurrence in other reptiles like stumpy tailed lizards in our area.

A Copperhead is known as a good snake to have in your area because, as well as its main diet of frogs and lizards, grasshoppers and other smaller animals, they will also eat Tiger Snakes.

Red Bellied Black Snake: *Pseudechis porphyriacus*:



The red-bellied black snake is one of the more commonly seen snakes (although I am yet to be called to a job where there is one). Normally they are around 1.25m in length so they also aren't a very large snake. The largest recorded was 2.5m so was actually a large fellow. The top of the snake is a



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Gloss shiny black whilst it's under belly is....Red, or sometimes a pink color. It is generally a very placid snake and likes to retreat if it doesn't feel safe. They have been noted to have a very strong smell so some people with good noses have actually used their smell to find them.

This is a venomous snake like all the others in our area, its venom is actually less deadly than the others, and there are no recorded deaths from being bitten by a red-bellied black snake. But that doesn't mean you should play with it. Like all snakes you see in Australia, Assume it is Venomous. We do get Pythons in Australia but they are more common around Eastern Victoria, like the Great Dividing Range. They are not native to our area so very unlikely to come across one (but not impossible as people do have pet Pythons that escape).

The Red-Bellied Black Snake is commonly found in woodlands but can also be seen swimming in your dams and rivers. They also like Swamplands, less likely to be spotted in open fields. Their main source of food is Fish, small mammals and other reptiles like lizards and frogs. Due to constant loss of habitat causing less frogs, it is thought that the population of the Red-Bellied Black Snake is dropping off. It can be found from Queensland all the way down to Victoria and Even South Australia. They prefer shallow water with plants and logs but can be seen on Adventures in people's backyards and sheds.

Red-bellied black snakes are great swimmers, they can even float on water so convincingly that they look like a stick. Because Red-Bellied Black Snakes are darker than most other snakes as a general rule they can absorb heat from the sun more quickly. This can work for and against them. This means that on a cooler but sunny late winter's morning they can optimize the sun's energy, but on a 45°C day in the middle of the summer they will hide and come out at night.

The Red-Bellied Black Snake gives birth to live young in individual membranous sacs normally between February and March. This is slightly different to the other snakes in our area which also give birth to live young, they are not in an egg but emerge from their sacs very shortly after birth

Red-Bellied Black Snakes Normally eat [frogs](#), but also other [reptiles](#) and small [mammals](#). They also (like the copperhead) eat other snakes (like Tiger Snakes), including other Red-Bellied Black Snakes. Being amazing swimmers they will also eat fish, they can swallow their dinner under water as well as on land. The Red-Bellied Black Snake is also a commonly kept pet (even though it is Venomous), some owners give them treats such as dog food, chicken nuggets and fish fillets.

Unfortunately for the red-bellied black snake, their main Habitat is normally where humans like to build, this has affected the population of frogs which is their preferred snack, reports say that their numbers are on the decline, they are also up against the same concerns the other snakes have. They are easy pickings for Kookaburras, other birds of prey, even feral and domestic cats and larger dogs.



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