

# What is a Reptile?

## Objective:

- To identify the characteristics of a reptile.
- To understand the roles that each animal has in an ecosystem.
- To learn about reptiles venomous vs. nonvenomous.

## Materials:

- Reptile cards
- Various animal pictures
- 2 plastic turtles
- 2 rattlesnake wooden toys
- Snake & Lizard mini poster
- Plush sea turtle
- Snake/Lizard skins
- Snake skeleton
- Rattlesnake skin on board
- Rattlesnake mount
- What's a reptile? poster

## Engagement:

1. Introduce yourself and the volunteers.
2. Introduce today's program.
3. Ask, "What does the word 'reptile' mean to you?"

## Reptile Program:

A reptile has the following characteristics:

- 1) Usually has skin covered with scales or bony plates
- 2) Skin can be dry, rough, smooth, or scaly
- 3) Lungs for breathing
- 4) Has a backbone (vertebrates)
- 5) Cold-blooded
- 6) Egg-laying

## Reptiles in Placer County Areas:

- 1) Rubber Boa
- 2) Western Yellow-bellied Racer
- 3) Striped Racer
- 4) Sharp-tailed Snake
- 5) Ring-necked Snake
- 6) Night snake
- 7) California King Snake
- 8) Mountain King Snake
- 9) Gopher Snake
- 10) Long-nosed Snake

- 11) Sierra Garter Snake
- 12) Terrestrial Garter Snake
- 13) Common Garter Snake
- 14) Western Rattle Snake
- 15) Northern Alligator Lizard
- 16) Southern Alligator Lizard
- 17) Blainville's Horned Lizard
- 18) Common Sagebrush Lizard
- 19) Western Fence Lizard
- 20) Gilbert's Skink
- 21) Western Skink
- 22) Tiger Whiptail
- 23) Northern Western Pond Turtle
- 24) Southern Western Pond Turtle
- 25) Red-eared Slider

**Reptiles Diet:**

- 1) Carnivore – animal that eats meat
- 2) Omnivore – animal that eats plants and meat
- 3) Herbivore – animal that eats plants
- 4) Insectivore– animal that eats insects

**Types of mouths:**

- 5) Snakes – use fangs
- 6) Turtles – use a beak
- 7) Lizards – use teeth

**Skin functions:**

- 1) Scales/bony Plates - protection
- 2) Camouflage – color or patterns
- 3) Warnings –color or patterns

**Fun Facts:**

- 1) All snakes swallow their food whole.
- 2) Most snakes live off insects, rodents, birds, eggs, fish, frogs, lizards and small mammals.
- 3) All King snakes can eat venomous snakes because of their immunity to the venom.
- 4) Venomous verses Poisonous. Venomous is when something bits and injects into the skin. Poisonous is when one ingests something.

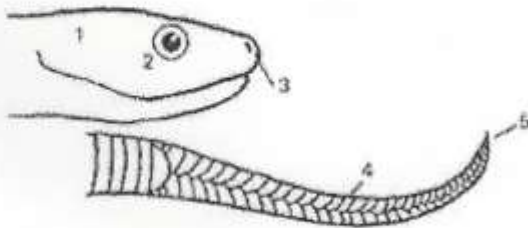
## Non-venomous Vs Venomous Snakes



Red touches black is friend of Jack.

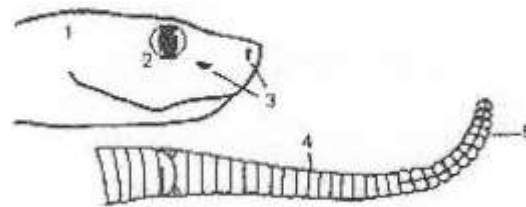


Red touches yellow, can kill a fellow.



### NON-VENOMOUS SNAKES

1. Head usually oval, but may be somewhat triangular.
2. Pupils round.
3. No pits-only nostrils present.
4. Divided scales on underside of tail
5. Although many snakes vibrate their tail when upset, non-venomous snakes never have rattles



### VENOMOUS SNAKES

1. Head distinctly triangular.
2. Pupils elliptical.
3. Pits as well as nostrils present.
4. Undivided scales on underside of tail.
5. Except for the copperhead, tail ends in a rattle.

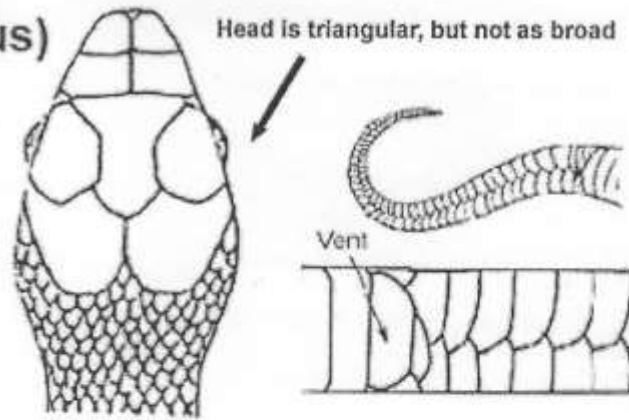
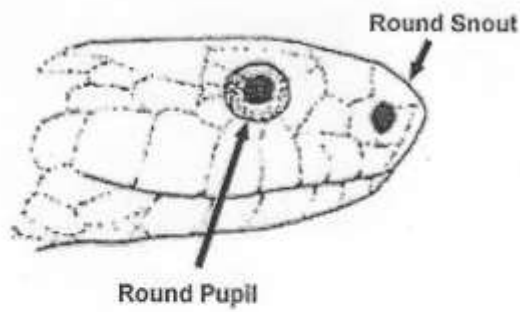
### Warnings

- Some snakes that look like they are nonvenomous may be venomous or the other way around. Make sure you *know* the kinds of snakes in your area.
- **Do not** harass a snake or get extra-close to it to try and identify it, unless you are already sure it is not venomous. Most snakes would prefer to avoid you.
- Many Venomous snakes are now critically endangered or threatened in the United States. It is against federal law to kill or interfere with any endangered species, and that includes protected venomous snakes. In addition, in many states it is illegal to kill, capture, harass, or possess wild snakes of any sort, venomous or nonvenomous.

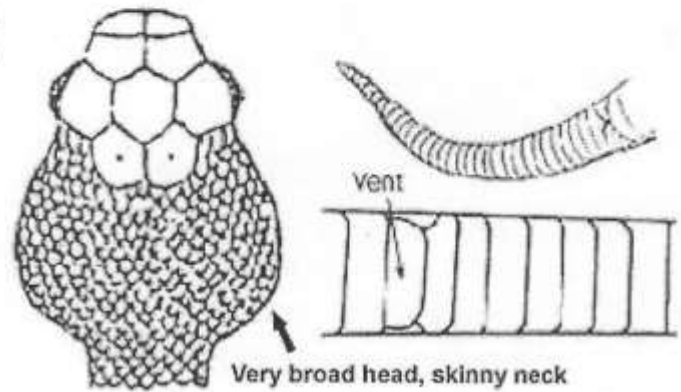
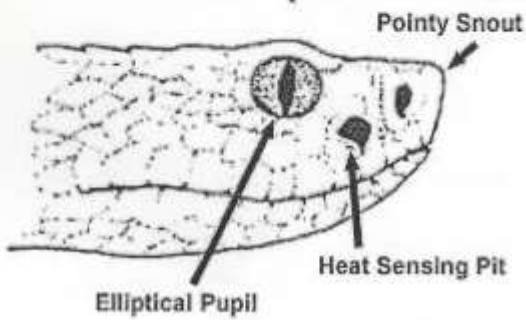
### Tips to minimize conflicts with rattlesnakes while hiking:

- Stick to well-used, open trails
- Avoid walking through thick brush and willow thickets
- Do not step or put your hands where you cannot see
- Wear over-the-ankle boots and loose-fitting long pants.
- Watch all snakes from a distance and be aware of defensive behaviors that let you know you are too close

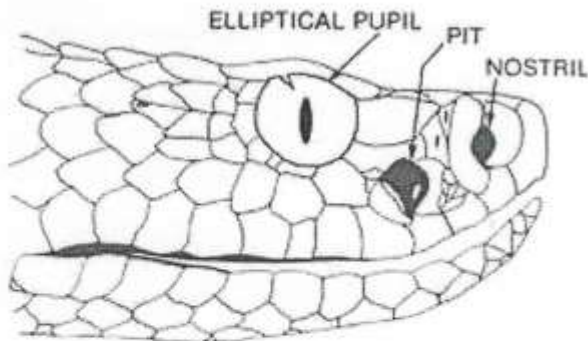
## Watersnake (Non-venomous)



## Cottonmouth (Venomous)



### PIT VIPERS - VENOMOUS



### NONVENOMOUS

(except coral snake)

