

COMMON SNAKES OF CENTRAL INDIA

Snakes are cold-blooded animals that have been present on earth for the past 125 to 112 million years. They are distributed throughout the world except in the Arctic and Antarctic regions. About 2900 species of snakes are found on our planet, of which 600 species are venomous. India is home to over 278 species of snakes, of which only 61 are venomous, and is well known for the "Big Four" venomous snakes causing most human deaths: the Indian Cobra, Common Krait, Russel's Viper, and Saw-scaled Viper.

The reasons for death are usually lack of awareness and absence of timely and effective medical treatment.

TO AVOID SNAKE BITES

- ✓ Keep the surroundings clean.
- ✓ Keep the house free of rats.
- ✓ Keep bags on a raised platform.
- ✓ Always check beddings and clothes before using them.
- ✓ If you see a snake, remain calm and immediately call a rescuer.
- ✓ Always wear shoes or gumboots when on field.
- ✓ If you are working late in the evening, carry a stick and torch.
- ✓ Always be cautious about any snake you see and give it enough space.

SNAKE SUPERSTITIONS

- Snakes do not drink milk. Snakes that are fed milk die soon.
- There is no snake pearl, it is often the snake's shining scales on the head.
- Snakes do not have beards, it is usually the snake skin which they moult as they grow in size.
- Snakes do not remember faces, nor do they take revenge.
- None of the snakes found in India can spit venom.
- Sand Boas do not have two heads.

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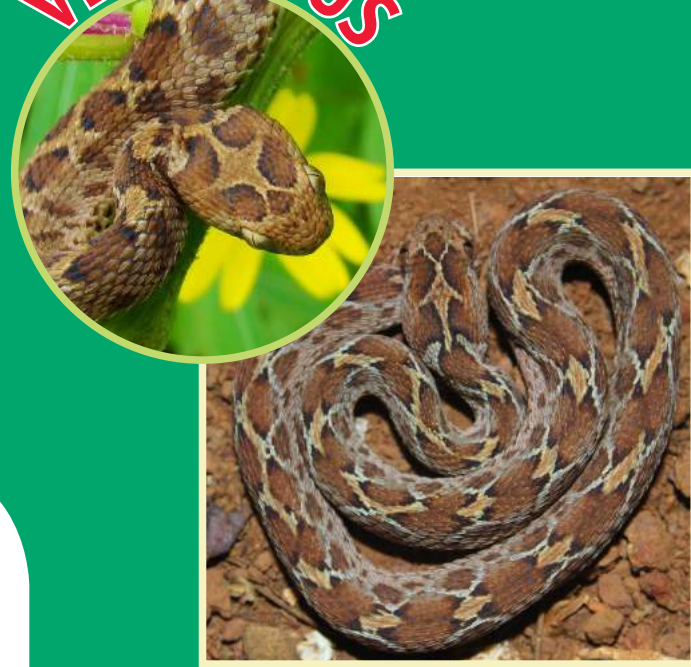
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DISCLAIMER: This poster only serves as a guide to the common snakes of Central India and gives basic primary first aid information in case of a snake bite. It should not be treated as a guide to treating snake bites. In case of a snake bite, the victim must be taken to the nearest hospital as soon as possible.

VENOMOUS



SAW-SCALED VIPER
Echis carinatus

Up to 0.4 m in length.
Distinct arrow-shaped mark on head.
Rubs scales when disturbed.
Feeds on lizards, frogs and mice.
Found under rocks, crevices and leaf litter.

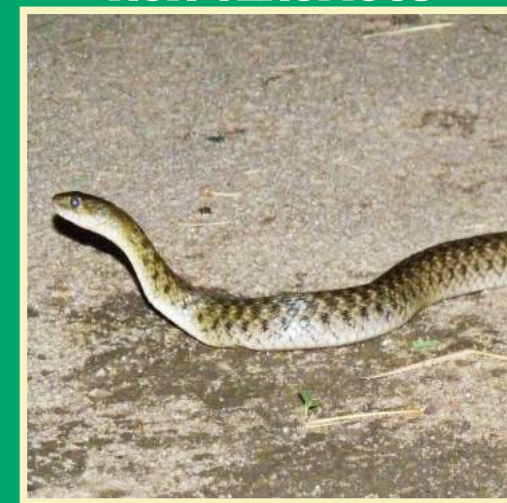
NON-VENOMOUS



COMMON CAT SNAKE
Boiga trigonata

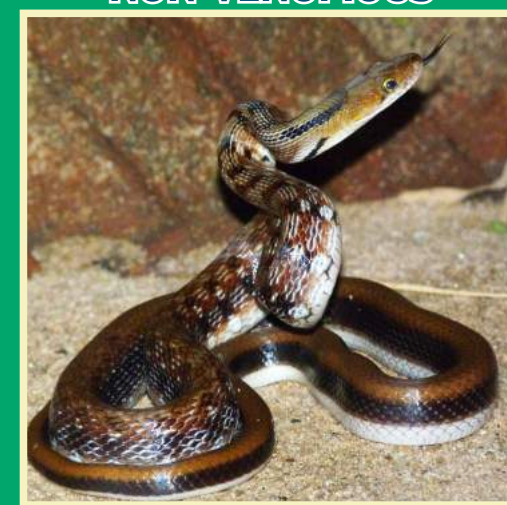
Mistaken for Saw-scaled Viper.
Up to 0.4 to 0.7 m in length.
Usually at the base of shrubs and near forest floor.
Nocturnal in nature.
Coops into an 'S' to strike when threatened.
Feeds on lizards, frogs and mice.

NON-VENOMOUS



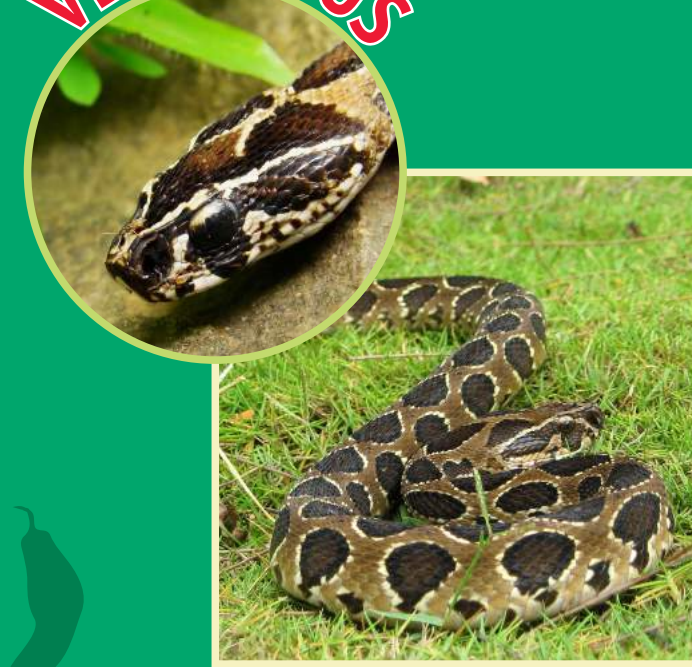
CHECKERED KEELBACK
Xenochrophis piscator

NON-VENOMOUS



COMMON TRINKET SNAKE
Coelognathus helena helene

VENOMOUS



RUSSELL'S VIPER
Daboia russelli

Up to 1 to 1.5 m in length.
Hisses when agitated (which sounds like a pressure cooker whistle).
Aggressive snake, active during day and night.
Primarily feeds on rats.

NON-VENOMOUS



COMMON SAND BOA
Gongylophis conicus

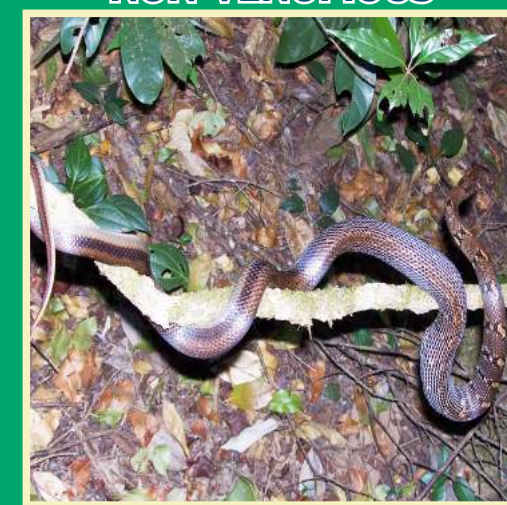
Mistaken for Russel's Viper.
Up to 1 m in length.
Stout, keeled body with small spikes that help the snake during burrowing.
Prefers living underground.
Feeds on rats and mice by constricting.

NON-VENOMOUS



BUFF-STRIPED KEELBACK
Aphiesma stotatum

NON-VENOMOUS



MONTANE TRINKET SNAKE
Coelognathus helena monticollaris

VENOMOUS



COMMON KRAIT
Bungarus caeruleus

Up to 1 m in length.
Black with single or pair of white bands.
Nocturnal in nature.
Distinct hexagonal scales on back.
Feeds on other snakes.

NON-VENOMOUS



COMMON WOLF SNAKE
Lycodon aulicus

Mistaken for Common Krait.
Up to 1 m in length.
Brownish snake with prominent bands near head that get narrower towards tail.
Excellent climber on walls and usually found hidden in crevices and holes.

VENOMOUS



INDIAN COBRA
Naja naja

Up to 1 to 2 m in length.
Displays hood when disturbed.
Commonly found near rocks.
Primarily feeds on rats,
hence occasionally enters homes.

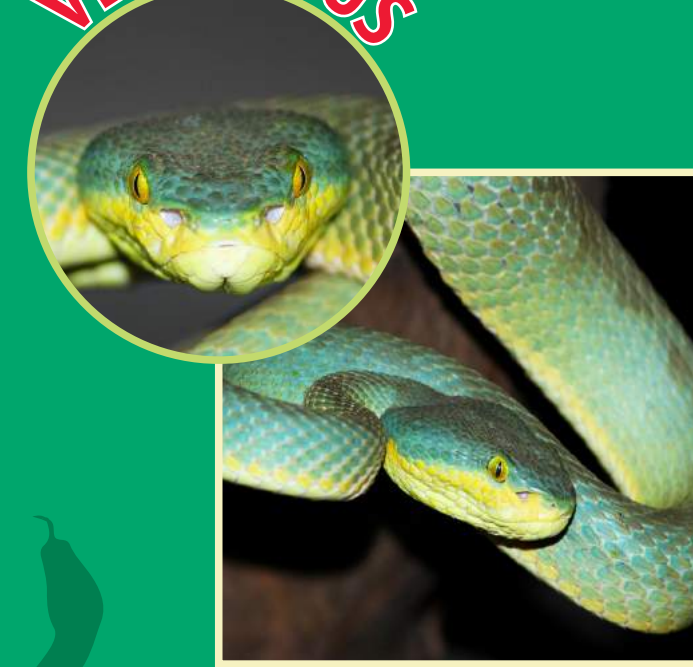
NON-VENOMOUS



INDIAN RAT SNAKE
Ptyas mucosa

Mistaken for Indian Cobra.
Up to 2 m in length.
Commonly encountered snake, specially during day.
Black bands below eye and near mouth.
Feeds on rats, lizards, and small birds.
Often seen in territorial fights in summer.

VENOMOUS



BAMBOO PIT VIPER
Trimeresurus gramineus

Up to 1 m in length.
Green in colour with a triangular head.
Stays close to the base of plants in wait of prey.
Primarily feeds on lizards and mice.
Hunts by ambush; active at night.

NON-VENOMOUS



GREEN KEELBACK
Macropisthodon plumbicolor

Mistaken for Bamboo Pit Viper.
Up to 1 m in length.
Usually found in tall grass and open lands.
Calm by nature and seldom bites.
Feeds largely on toads and frogs.
Juveniles have black and yellow markings on head.

POST SNAKE BITE CARE

DOs:

- ✓ Keep the victim calm with minimum movements.
- ✓ Remove any tight items such as watches or socks.
- ✓ Monitor vital signs like perspiration and fever.
- ✓ Take the victim to the nearest treatment centre as soon as possible.

DON'Ts:

- ✗ Do not capture the snake.
- ✗ Do not cut near the bitten area.
- ✗ Do not tie a cloth near the bitten area.
- ✗ Do not try to suck out the venom.
- ✗ Do not apply ice.
- ✗ Do not rely on local shamans.

ROLE OF SNAKES

- Snakes are the best pest controllers in farm lands.
- Snakes are indicators of a healthy ecosystem.
- All snakes are predatory in nature but also form an important part of the diet of many birds and mammals.
- Snake antivenom is produced using snake's venom. It is the only medicine known to be effective in treating a snake bite victim.

NEAREST TREATMENT CENTRE

NON-VENOMOUS



BRONZEBACK TREESNAKE
Dendrelaphis tristis

NON-VENOMOUS



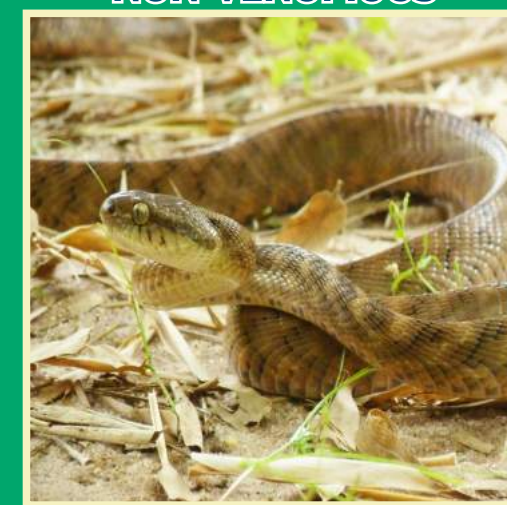
COMMON KUKRI
Oligodon arnensis

NON-VENOMOUS



INDIAN ROCK PYTHON
Molurus molurus

NON-VENOMOUS



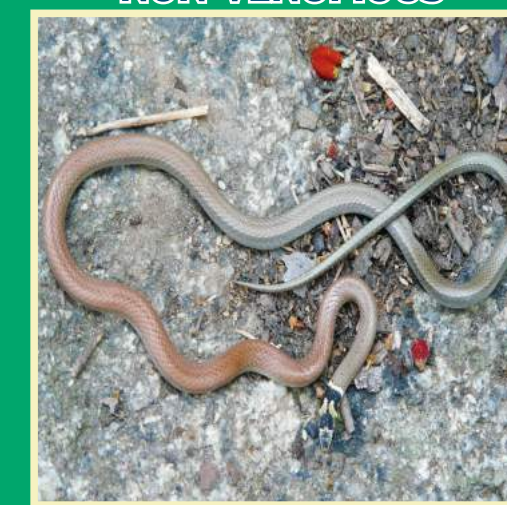
FOSTERN'S CAT SNAKE
Boiga forsteni

NON-VENOMOUS



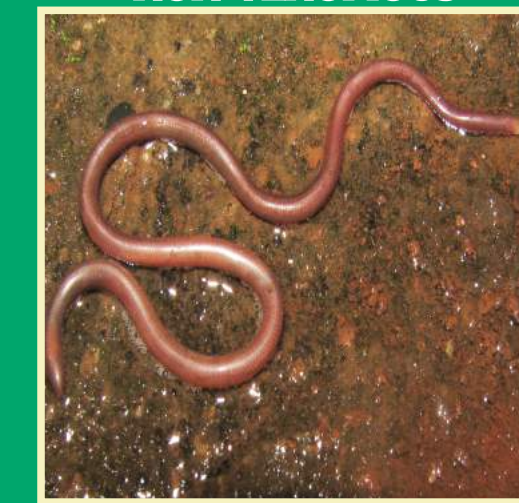
COMMON WINE SNAKE
Ahetulla nasuta

NON-VENOMOUS



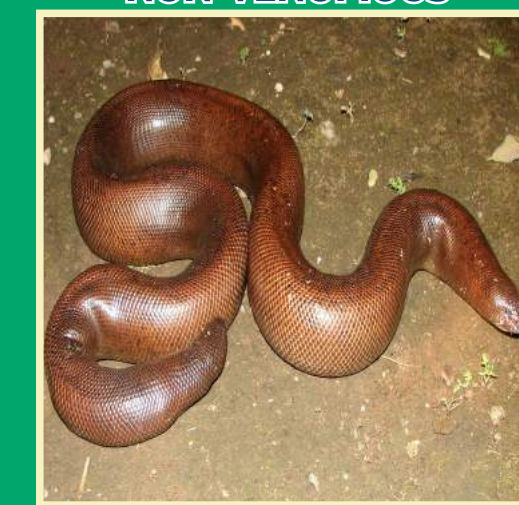
CANTOR'S BLACKHEADED SNAKE
Sibynophis sagittarius

NON-VENOMOUS



BRAHMINY BLIND SNAKE
Ramphotyphlops braminus

NON-VENOMOUS



RED SAND BOA
Eryx johnii