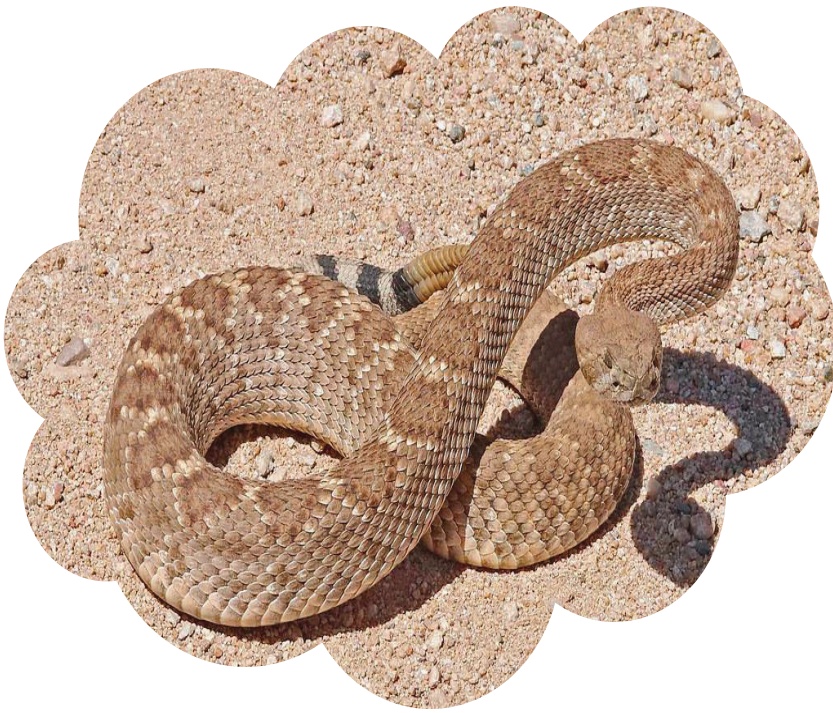


"Rattlesnake"

You may spend your entire life in Southern California and never see a RATTLESNAKE

This Wildlife is part of the California Tapestry of teaming wildlife and is Rarely Seen!

The fear created by Motion Pictures, about Flying Snakes or the myth that if you are bit by a Rattler, you're Dead, just makes unjustified conversations!



Because the Rattlesnake can deliver a lethal or painful bite, your fears are promoted around the very few bites in Los Angeles County annually, which number under 50.

The most recent death in California from a Rattler occurred in 2010 (Cuyamaca) when a Fish and Wildlife researcher was studying "Steelhead" in a river and was bit by a rattlesnake. Your Chances of death from a Rattlesnake Bite are less than 0.28% if treated at a medical facility within 4/hours. This number rises to 2.6% if not treated at all. However; a Rattlesnake Bite is Painful! (Statistical information (here-in) is per: ***(The State of California Poison Control)***).

It is important to get medical help ASAP even if there is no bleeding.

Do not hesitate. Your BEST Medical Treatment is a Cell Phone. (CALL 911)

WARNING

Summer is Rattlesnake Season

Rattlesnakes are a seasonal animal. They "Usually" Hibernate in the cold month of the year, which in Los Angeles County is generally from Mid-November or December (Depending on where you are). Timber Rattlers hibernate sooner as they dominate the High Country "colder" Elevations and move to underground dens (Usually in massive numbers, helping each other survive the cold). The Western Diamondback (a much larger snake that might be out all-year) however; in L.A. County they too usually also go into hibernation in the Winter.

You should be mindful that snakes can be out anytime during the year, but a period of hibernation in the cold months is more of a normal (Usual Cycle).

“Living With Urban Wildlife” in Los Angeles County

You are on a hike and come across a Rattlesnake!

What should you do/or Not, to avoid a confrontation
or What Should You Do (Or NOT) if you are BIT?

The source information in this WILDLIFE SAFETY BULLETIN is from:

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

Additional comments are from County Fish & Wildlife Commissioner Etter, noted in RED

- **#1. Call 911 Immediately. This should be your First Response!** *And..... STAY CALM!*
- **#2. If there is No Cell Service or you do not have a phone with you, and you are in a group that can provide another person (Other than 4 or more/persons to assist with extraction of the injured person,) “Send them for help!”**
- **#3.) Gently Wash the Bite with soap and water.**
- **#4.) Elevate extremity Above the level of the heart. This may be difficult if the bite is in the abdomen or upper body. Transport the victim for medical services ASAP; be that a Medi-Vac, or by use of an on-site constructed ¹travois. Get the victim to a Medical Facility. (Before you go on your hike, get the location and phone number of the nearest bite center) The California Poison Control 24/7 number is: (1-800-222-1222)**

The following is as important as the Treatments!

- 1.) **DO NOT** Pack the wound in ice! *Cold may coagulate venom or the blood.*
- 2.) **DO NOT** Apply a Tourniquet or ²constrictive bandage.
- 3.) **DO NOT** Slice the Wound with any instrument. *This sometimes makes things worse by causing Infections and will not bleed the venom from the patient.*
- 4.) **DO NOT** Apply suction by your mouth or other device. *Using your mouth could allow any abrasions, cavity or gum issues to poison you!*
- 5.) **DO NOT** Apply any open flame to the wound. *Heat may cause the venom to flow more freely into the system. And/or the application of heat may compromise the bite area with burns, which can become infected.*
- 6.) **DO NOT** Apply Electricity to the area. *This only stimulates the venom.*



(Above) Timber Rattlesnake.

(Below) Mojave Green



Rattlesnake Bites Rarely result in Death! However; they are more likely to be complicated by poor First-Aid Practices. Even if you know what variety of snake has bitten you, seeking professional Medical Treatment is a MUST! Take note of the animal and try to identify them. This will help Medical Professionals perform the best treatments for your wound!

All Areas in California are Potentially Snake Habitat. There are many varieties of Rattlesnakes. In Los Angeles County, the most common is the Western Diamondback and the Mojave Green or small Timber Rattlesnake.

If you come across ANY SNAKE, immediately Back Away Slowly. (No sudden movements, which may excite the animal and provoke an attack.) If hiking with others, be sure they are aware of your sighting.

I have encountered all 3 Rattlers discussed in this issue of *“Living With Urban Wildlife”* None of my incidents were met with an aggressive behavior by the snake. The snake slithered away or coiled, prepared to defend themselves. My largest encounter was in Northern California, with a 4’ Western Diamondback. At NO TIME did my encounters provoke an attack. Quite to the contrary, the snakes were docile or slithered away. Rattlers can slither or strike very quickly.

DISCLAIMER: The “Safety” Information and/or Advice in this issue of *“Living With Urban Wildlife”* is from LOS ANGELES COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH with Edits by: (L.A. County 5th Supervisorial District) Fish and Wildlife Commissioner James Etter and does NOT reflect the opinion(s) of other County F&W Commissioners or the County Board of Supervisors.

¹ Travois: A Mountaineering (Lashed Together) Carrying Gurney. This devise can be found in The “Scouting America” Handbook. ² Constrictive Bandage: “TOURNIQUET” Do Not restrict the blood flow other than elevating the bite above the heart.