



If you encounter a rattlesnake, do the following:

- 1) Leave the snake alone
- 2) Walk Away
- 3) Call Entomology at 634-2714 or Natural Resources at 634-2738



The Northern Pacific Rattlesnake at Beale Air Force Base

An Informational Guide on the Identification, Biology, Ecology, and Importance of Rattlesnakes and Other Snake Species Inhabiting Beale Air Force Base



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At Beale Air Force Base
the ONLY Venomous Species of Snake is
the Northern Pacific Rattlesnake

Non-Venomous Snakes At Beale Air Force Base



California Kingsnake

Valley Gartersnake

Pacific Gophersnake



Ring-necked snake

Western Yellow-bellied Racer

Sharp-tailed snake

Many different species of snake live at Beale Air Force base. Many snakes that live here display bright colors (California Kingsnake, Ring-necked Snake, Sharp-tailed Snake), or mimic rattlesnakes by looking like them and by imitating rattlesnakes behavior (Pacific Gophersnake). However, it's important to know that the ONLY venomous species of snake on base is the Northern Pacific Rattlesnake.

All species of snake are non-aggressive towards people, but they can and will defend themselves if harassed or cornered. Snakes may bite, hiss, and even shake their tails (which can sound like a rattlesnake in dry brush), to defend themselves, and to confuse predators into thinking that they are venomous.

The Natural History of the Northern Pacific Rattlesnake

Size: Adults (15-36") Young (~6-8" when born)

Appearance: Color vary by individual but will usually match the surrounding substrate and the range can include brown, olive-green, gray, tan, or reddish-brown. Along the back of the body are dorsal blotches and near the tail are a series of black and white rings.

Diet: Rattlesnakes eat mice, rats, lizards, birds, frogs, and squirrels.

Reproduction: Unlike most snake, Rattlesnakes don't lay eggs, they give birth to their young like mammals do.

Ecological Role: Rattlesnakes, play an important role in any ecosystem. Snakes eat pest species like rodents and insects, and are themselves eaten by other predators like hawks, bobcats, raccoons, and other snakes. Removing snakes from any environment tips the delicate balance between species and has severe consequences for all members of the food chain. Please give snakes your distance, and respect.

Similar Looking Species: At Beale AFB one non-venomous species can be easily mistaken for a rattlesnake. The Pacific Gophersnake is similarly colored, will flatten its head into a triangle and will shake its tail when threatened (although it doesn't have a rattle).



Northern Pacific Rattlesnake



Pacific Gophersnake