

# VENOMOUS SNAKES OF FLORIDA

## PIT VIPERS

(*Crotalidae*) Hemotoxic: Venom causes severe pain, swelling, and bleeding



### EASTERN DIAMONDBACK RATTLESNAKE

*Crotalus adamanteus*

- Found statewide in both dry and wet habitats.
- Largest venomous snake in the United States, with an average length of 5 feet and a maximum of more than 7 feet.
- Heavy-bodied with light to dark brown color, distinct diamond pattern on back, and rattle at end of tail.
- Considered to be the most dangerous snake due to its size.



### PIGMY RATTLESNAKE

*Sistrurus miliarius*

- Abundantly found statewide in wooded habitats, but occasionally found in marshes.
- Average length is 1 to 1-1/2 feet, and because of its small size, the "buzz" of the rattle might be difficult to hear.
- Gray in color, with dark gray or brown blotches and red highlight from head to tail.
- Due to its defensive behavior, this snake is a frequent offender.



### COTTONMOUTH/WATER MOCCASIN

*Agkistrodon piscivorus*

- Found statewide near bodies of water.
- Average adult length: 3 to 4 feet.
- Colors vary from black to gray to brown with dark brown markings on its heavy body.
- Distinctive patterns appear on juveniles.
- Known for holding its ground, and when disturbed, will often give an "open mouth" display.



### COPPERHEAD

*Agkistrodon contortrix*

- Found in northern Florida in wooded areas and swampy highlands.
- Average adult length: 2 to 3 feet.
- Light brown with dark brown to red-brown saddle-shaped cross bands.
- Easily blends into surroundings due to its unique camouflage ability.

## CORAL SNAKES

(*Elapidae*): Neurotoxic - Venom causes minor pain, swelling and discoloration. Stroke-like symptoms, slurred speech and difficulty breathing may occur hours later



### CORAL SNAKE

*Micrurus fulvius*

- Found statewide.
- Average length: 2 to 3 feet.
- Colorful red, yellow and black, thin-bodied snake.
- Often confused with the non-venomous Scarlet King Snake.

### NON-VENOMOUS SCARLET KING SNAKE

Can be identified by the rhyme  
"Red touches yellow, kills a fellow.  
Red touches black, venom lack"



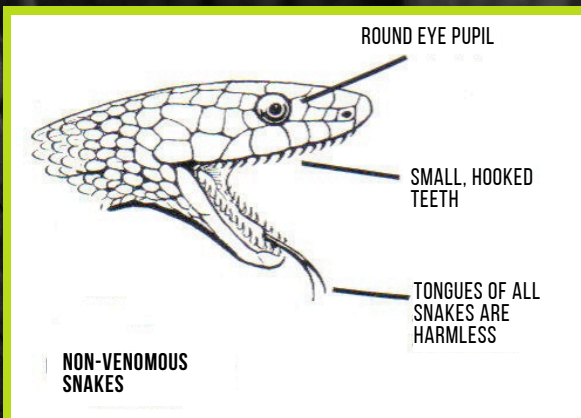
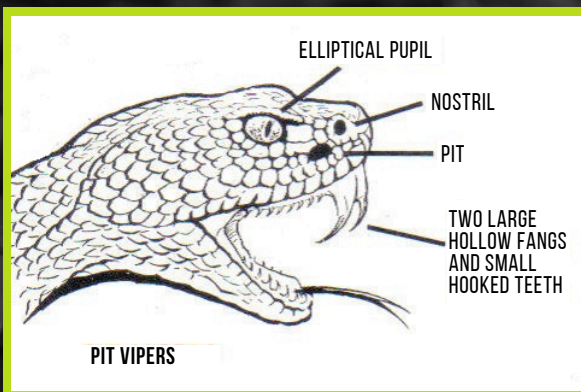
### CANEBRAKE RATTLESNAKE

*Crotalus horridus*

- Found in northern Florida in dry wooded areas.
- Average length: 3 to 4 feet.
- Heavy-bodied tan snake with black cross bands and black tail with rattle.
- Southern subspecies of the Timber Rattlesnake.



## IDENTIFYING TRAITS



## EMERGENCY CONTACTS

**CALL 911**  
**FLORIDA POISON INFORMATION CENTER NETWORK**  
 800-222-1222

**MIAMI-DADE FIRE RESCUE**  
 9300 NW 41<sup>ST</sup> Street, Miami, FL 33178  
 786-331-5000  
[www.miamidade.gov/mdfr](http://www.miamidade.gov/mdfr)

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## WHAT TO DO AFTER A SNAKE BITE

### DO

- Remain calm.
- Immediately call 911.
- Immobilize the bitten area.
- Keep affected area at or below the heart.
- Limit victim's movement.
- Remove all jewelry (i.e. rings, bracelets, watch, etc.), restrictive clothing and any constricting item before swelling occurs.
- Safely try to observe snake's identifying traits (i.e. colors, patterns and size).

### DON'T

- Don't use a tourniquet.
- Don't drink or apply alcohol.
- Don't cut or suck the wound.
- Don't apply ice.
- Don't attempt to catch the snake.
- Don't attempt to kill the snake.
- Don't touch/handle a dead snake.

### PREVENTION TIPS

- Be cautious around shrubs, tall grass, and areas surrounding canals, lakes and swamps.
- Always wear protective gloves and shoes when working outdoors.
- Look before sitting, stepping or reaching near or around rocks and logs.
- Avoid placing hands in areas that are hidden or concealed.
- Use caution when cleaning up debris after natural disasters (i.e. hurricanes, tornadoes, floods) for displaced and frightened snakes.

### DANGEROUS CRITTERS IN YOUR BACKYARD

Miami-Dade Fire Rescue offers this program intended for students and aimed at prevention, safety, and first aid for bites and stings from dangerous critters. A presentation may be scheduled by calling the Community Affairs Division at 786-331-5000.

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**MIAMI-DADE FIRE RESCUE  
 VENOM RESPONSE TEAM**