

# Snake Safety in SC and GA



- Most snake species in the Southeast are harmless and all bite only in defense.
- Risk of snakebite is exaggerated. Most bites are easily avoided with common sense and basic safety.
- Snakes do not intentionally chase people. They are much more afraid of us than we should be of them.
- Venomous snakes use their venom primarily to kill prey. They use it as a defense only when they are harassed or handled. Many snake species are essential predators that control rodents and other pests.
- **Use common sense. Wear appropriate attire, watch where you step, and do not harass, capture, or attempt to kill snakes.**
- **ALWAYS watch where you step** and place your hands; at night always use a flashlight.
- If you are walking in long grass or thick brush, **wear heavy boots and/or snake leggings.**
- **NEVER pick up a snake** unless you are positive it is a harmless species.
- If you see a snake, **maintain a safe distance (> 6 feet)** – most snake bites occur when people try to capture or kill snakes.
- Familiarize yourself with local venomous and nonvenomous snakes – for information see [www.uga.edu/srelherp](http://www.uga.edu/srelherp).

## In Case of a Snakebite:

- Keep the victim calm and reassured. Remove all jewelry or watches from affected area.
- **Contact local emergency services for transport to a local hospital emergency room. In the CSRA, contact** the University Hospital Emergency Room in Augusta, GA, **(706-774-5060)** and let them know a snakebite victim is on the way. Request that they contact an attending physician experienced in treating snakebite.
- Reduce physical exertion by the victim
- **DO NOT cut or ice** the affected area or use constricting bands or tourniquets.
- Take note of the snake's size and appearance (pattern) or take a digital (or cell phone) photo, but **DO NOT try to capture or kill the snake.**
- Remain calm and await emergency assistance.

## Venomous Snakes of South Carolina and Georgia see [www.uga.edu/srelherg](http://www.uga.edu/srelherg) for details



### Copperhead

*Most common venomous snake  
Prefers moist forest/swamp*



### Cottonmouth (Water Moccasin)

*Semi-aquatic  
Threatening open-mouth display*



### Timber/Canebrake Rattlesnake

*Largest rattlesnake in the CSRA  
Important consumer of rodents*



### Pigmy Rattlesnake

*Less than 2 feet long  
Tiny rattle  
Prefers open pine forest*



### Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake

*Not found in the CSRA  
(only towards coast)  
Declining - Rare in SC*



### Eastern Coral Snake

*Rare – only in dry, sandy areas  
Red bands touch yellow*

## Common Harmless Snakes of South Carolina and Georgia



### Banded Watersnake

*Very common, semi-aquatic*



### Black Racer

*Very common, large, fast moving*



### Rat Snake - juvenile

*Often enters homes  
Adults reach large size*



### Eastern Hognose Snake

*Variable in color, spreads neck*



### Scarlet Snake

*Small, often falls in swimming pools*

