# Striped or Barred Snakes

1a. Orange snake, very small, two bars at back of head and black nape patch. Vaguely banded in speckled black and white

b. Black with white or creamish striped or bands c. Brown, reddish or fawn with darker stripes

**2**a. Black and white along length of body

b. Black and light fawn bands, broad head, distinct neck ... Stephens Banded Snake

3a. Short, squat, thick-bodied, very broad head,

thin neck, tail with terminal grub-like spine, dark bands alternating with lighter bands b. Reddish brown transverse irrebular bars, belly

apricot, head wider than neck, large eyes c. Brown with thin black rings

d. If snake grey/olive or fawn grey with transverse bars across back it may be either

... Coral Snake ...See 2

... Death Adder

... See 3

... Bandy Bandy

... Brown Tree Snake ... Brown Snake (juvenile)

... (i) Eastern Tiger Snake (ii) Rough-scaled Snake

WHITE NAPED

The first two are highly venomous and dangerous. The Keel-back is non-venomous and completely harmless. The Rough-scaled Snake may adopt an aggressive stance with the head broadening at the back into a broad arrow. Treat all this group as dangerous. In the case of a bite, the loreal scale (see Fig 5) is present on the Keel-back

Note: The Death Adder, Tiger Snake and Keel-back are variable geographically. They range from grey through to the browns or very dark or orangish.

# Snakes of North-East NSW and South-East Queensland

Snake identificatation chart by Ellen White (1982)

#### **Plain Snakes**

(Upper body all one colour)

**1**a. Head and neck same plain colour as body b. Had or neck with marks or bands **2**a.Black upper body ... See 3

b. Brown to grey upper body ... See 4 c. Olive to drk green upper body, lemon yellow belly ...Green Tree Snake **3**a. Small snake, dark grey to black, pinkish/cream

b. Large black snake, belly red (sometimes pale) c. Large black snale, belly dull blue/grey

d. Small snake, lemon/yellow belly

4a. Dull grey/brown ... Eastern Tiger b. Some shade of brown from light to chocolate or darker ... See 5

**5**a Back of head very broad, neck much smaller b. Neck not greatly smaller than back of head

**6**a. Bands at nape of neck b. No bands at nape but other head markings

7a. Broad whjite or cream band at nape, upper body dark grey/black b. Narrow cream band at nape, upper body dark brown ... Dwarf Crowned Snake

c. Grey, cream or yellow band round snout to back of neck, upper body dark brown

8a. Red or orange patch at back of head, light to dark brown body

b. Head greyish or light brown to cream with black markings, lips vertically striped black and white or cream, upper body dark grey c. Yellow comma-shaped mark at each eye, upper body light grey/green, sometimes russet towards head, very large eyes

d. Yellow or cream line from eye back along side of head, upper lips yellow or cream, upper body dark olive green to black

COMMON NAME SCIENTIFIC NAME TEETH AV. LENGTH ( Children's Python nond or Carpet Sn 0.5 eel-back or Freshwater Dendrolophis punct reen Tree Snake own Tree Snake Death Adder Aeanthophis antarctici Γiger Snake Notechis scullatus Oxyuranus scullatus Eastern Brown Snake Pseudonaia textilis 0.75 1.5 Rough-scaled Snake Tropedichis carinatus Spotted Black Snake suedechis guttatus 1.5 Red-bellied Black Snake Psuedechis porphyrius Eastern Small-eved Snak Crypyophis nigrescens (ellow-faced Whip Snake | Demansia psammophis 0.8 Stephens Banded Snake Ioplocephalus stephen White-naped Snake Cacophis harriettae Owarf Crwoned Snake Cacophis krefftii Red-naped Snake Black-bellied Swamp Sr Pale-headed Snake Hoplocephalus forgua Coral Snake 0.5 Bandy Bandy

Habitat preference: A = all types of habitat; S = swamps or creeks; R = rain or moist forests; W = open woodland Food: 🕰 mammals; 🥒 birds; 🐗 reptiles; 🐠 frogs; 🛥 fish;

Active period: ☐ day (diurnal); ☐ night (nocturnal); ☐ mainly day; № mainly night

## Snake Families and Characteristics

There are five Austrlian snake groups or families. The venomous sea snakes (Hydrophiidae) and the harmless worm-like blind snakes (Typhlopidae) occur in this region, but are rarely

The Pythons (Boidae) have large, solid teeth, backwardly curved to help move the prey down the throat (Fig 1). These animals kill by suffocating their prey.

In the family Colubridae, the Keel=back Snake and the Green Tree Snake have small, solid teeth (Fig 2). They catch and eat their prey alive. In the same fmily, the Brown Tree Snake, sometimes called the Night Tiger, is rear-fanged (Fig 3). The venom from this fang immobilises th prey as it passes down the throat. The fang is so placed as to be useless as a weapon, and

The fifth group, the Elapidae, have the front teeth modified as venom injectors to kill their prey (Fig 4). It is from this group that all dangerous Australian snakes come. However, while all are dangerous, only comparatively few are dangerous to humans. This family can be distinguished from the previous two common families by the absence of the loreal scales on the head (Fig 5). These scales lie between the nasal scales and the preocular (eye) scales, if present.

All Australian Pythons lay eggs, as do the three local Colubrid snakes, but most of the local Elapid snakes bear live young or, as with the Red-bellied Black Snake and some of the crowned snakes, membranous eggs are laid which hatch soon after.

Growth in the snakes relies on the shedding or sloughing of the skin. This may occur as often as five times a year, and is most frequent in young or injured snakes. Since the skin over the eye is also shed at this time, it becomes cloudy for a few days prior ro sloughing. At this time their 'flight distance', the distance allowed between themselves and a perceived aggressor before they try to escape, becomes greater - that is, they are more likely to defend themselves if unable to flee. However, sloughing normally occurs secretively.

All reptiles depend on the sun for their energy, either directly or by conduction through the earth. Both nocturnal and diurnal snakes usually bask in the morning, the angle of the body determining the amount of heat absorbed. Coiling, as it is commonly seen in the Carpet Snake, reduces the heat loss; burrowing is also used by some snakes.

As snakes cool below the level best for activity, the 'flight distance' amy again be increased. This is most commonly in late evening or early morning. During the winter months, May to August, temperatures are generally too low for reptilian activity, and a period of dornancy results. Unusually warm weather will allow activity, but again, 'flight distance' will be large. In Spring, some snakes mob together for mating and then are more likely to be encountered; at other times they tend to stick to their own territories.

### Snakes Near Home

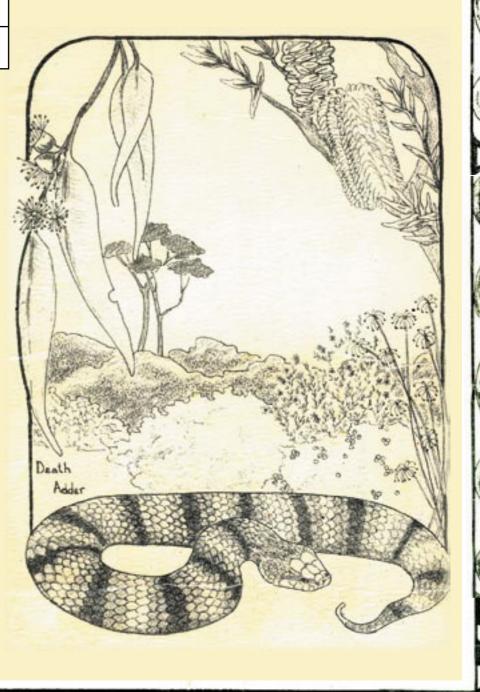
Clearly, snakes will only be around habitation if food is plentifully available With the exception of the Yello-faced Whip Snake and the Eastern Smalleyed Snake which eat small lizards, all the potentially dangerous snakes will be attracted to habited areas if there is a plentiful supply of small mammals (rats and mice), eggs or poultry readily available to them. The harmless Bown Tree Snake and the Carpet Snake are particularly common if food is

The problem may be controlled by:

• minimising the food supply to rodents near the house

• ensuring that there are no corners or holes in or round the house where rats and mice may nest. Cupboards should be rat-proof, wall linings wellfitting, and entrance to space between roof and ceiling plugged. Rats and mice will not nest unless they feel well hidden.

• Fowl runs may be designed and kept to minimise rats. Young birds need



Keelback

#### b. Else, brown with irregular patches **2**a. Olive brown with dark bands or patches b. Dark background with light patches which are

Patterned Snakes

usually bounded by black; many small head scales

1a. Dark grey to black, mottled with grey or cream

... Children's Python

... Spotted Black Snake

...Small-eyed snake

...Red-bellied Black

... Green Tree Snake

...White-naped snake

... Red-naped Snake

...Pale-headed Snake

... Yellow-faced Whip Snake

... Black-bellied Swamp Snake

... Golden Crowned Snake

... Taipan

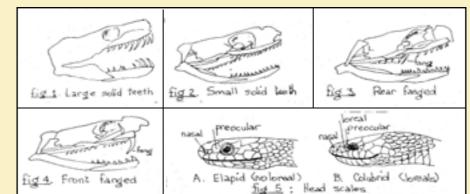
... See 7

... See 8

... Brown Snake

... Spotted Black Snake

... Diamond Python or Carpet Snake





GALLERY . CAFE







Bandy Bandy







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