

# ALBERTA'S SNAKES

## Snakes in Alberta?!

Yep, you heard that right! Alberta is home to 6 snake species:

- Bullsnake
- Plains gartersnake
- Red-sided gartersnake
- Prairie rattlesnake
- Wandering gartersnake
- Plains hog-nosed snake

Of all of these species, only 1 has venom that can be harmful to humans, and that is the Prairie rattlesnake. These animals are typically only found in southern Alberta.

## Did you know?

Keeping gartersnakes as pets in Alberta is illegal unless you acquire the proper permit.



A Prairie rattlesnake. Photo credit: Steve Knight

## Where do they live?

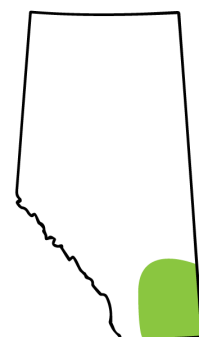
Red-sided Gartersnake



Plains Gartersnake



Bullsnake



Wandering Gartersnake



Plains Hog-nosed Snake



Prairie Rattlesnake



# EDMONTON'S SNAKES

## Plains Gartersnake

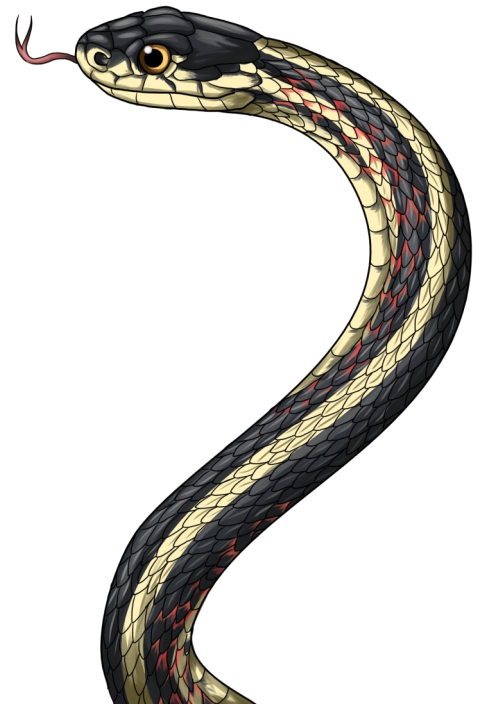
- Plains gartersnakes favour meadows, grasslands, and open woodlands as habitat, and may be seen in urban natural areas
- This species bears live young, and they do not lay eggs
- In the winter, Plains gartersnakes hibernate like most other gartersnakes
- These snakes feed on fish, amphibians, small mammals, worms and insects
- They appear very similar to the Red-sided gartersnake, with a few key differences: no red scales above the lateral stripes, and more black around the lips



Plains Gartersnake. Credit: Wikimedia, CCASA 4.0

## Red-sided Gartersnake

- The Red-sided gartersnake is the one most likely to be found in the Edmonton Region
- They can often be seen in urban areas sunning themselves on the concrete, usually beside natural areas like parks and ravines
- These snakes have the widest range in Alberta
- During the winter, they hibernate underground in large groups, in both natural and human-made structures
- In the spring, the snakes emerge, and breed in what appears like a writhing mass of snakes.
- Females give birth to 10—15 live young in midsummer
- The diet of these snakes usually consists of insects, frogs, toads, salamanders, earthworms, leeches, small fish, small mammals, and sometimes birds and eggs



Red-sided gartersnake