

SNAKES

BENEFITS OF SNAKES

Snakes are important for maintaining a balanced ecosystem as both predator and prey in the food chain. They control rodent populations and serve as a food source for other animals such as coyotes and raptors.

Their absence can lead to an unbalanced ecosystem, so it's essential to preserve their habitats and populations.

NATURAL HISTORY

- Snakes are present across the continental United States and can adapt to various environments, including urban areas such as parks and gardens.
- Snakes are carnivorous animals, which means they eat only meat. They do not have the teeth for chewing, so they swallow their prey whole. Their diet often includes rats, birds, eggs, mice, frogs, and other small rodents. Some species, like the DeKay's brownsnake, also eat insects and earthworms.
- Social behavior among snake species varies greatly. While most prefer a solitary life, studies have revealed that some species have extensive social networks.
- Snakes' activity levels are affected by their location and the climate. They can be diurnal (active during the day) or nocturnal (active at night).

TIPS FOR REDUCING HUMAN-SNAKE CONFLICTS:

- **Respect snakes and their space** to avoid snake bites. Most bites occur when humans try to handle or harass snakes. Call a professional if you have a serious snake concern.
- **Be aware of when snakes are most active.** They are more active in warm weather and at night, and may be attracted to warm asphalt on a spring evening.
- **Wear protective clothing** when working outdoors, such as boots, long pants, and leather gloves when handling brush and debris.
- **Keep your pets leashed** when out for a walk to reduce the chance of a negative wildlife encounter.
- **Understanding snakes can reduce fear.** They play an important role in keeping pest populations, such as rats and mice, in check.



City of
Saginaw