

# Black Rat Snake



GARDEN EARTH  
NATURALIST  

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ECO-SERVICE CARDS

# BLACK RAT SNAKE

## IDENTIFICATION CLUES



- ◆ up to 8 feet long
- ◆ Color and pattern varies depending on age; generally adults are black on top with light markings along the belly; young are more patterned, gray with dark markings along the back.



### Where to Look

Black rat snakes are found in many places including woods, fields, meadows, barns, backyards and sometimes even get into attics.

### What It Eats.

Black Rat Snakes eat birds, eggs, mice, rats and other rodents, other snakes, frogs and lizards. They constrict their prey to suffocate it before eating it.



### Life Cycle

The female black rat snake will lay 5 - 30 eggs. The eggs are leathery, cylindrical and about two inches long. They lay their eggs under rocks or logs or hidden in the leaves. The newborn young are about 12 inches long.

### Who Eats It?

Young Black Rat Snakes are taken by raccoons, bobcat, owls and hawks. Humans are the primary predator of adults.

### Role in the Ecosystem

Black Rat snakes are an important part of the food chain both as predator and prey.



### Did You Know...

Black rat snakes, like most snakes, use their tongue to sense the air and help locate prey or detect predators.