

Rattler Alert!

Of the 36 species of rattlesnakes, 13 inhabit Arizona - more than any other state! The western diamondback can grow up to 5.5 feet long. They feed upon small mammals and birds. Rattlesnakes do not dig their own burrows, but use abandoned burrows of other animals and rocky crevices. Unintentionally, humans can provide shelter, food and water for rattlesnakes. By hanging a bird feeder in your yard, you not only attract birds, but small mammals like chipmunks and ground squirrels love to eat the fallen seed. This in turn attracts rattlesnakes. Wood piles and under houses make great homes for rattlesnakes. To discourage rattlesnakes from entering your yard, do not feed birds, clean up any piles of wood or debris that look like good rattlesnake shelter and fill rodent holes in your yard to prevent rattlesnakes from moving in. A four foot high wall that is sunk into the ground should prevent most snakes from getting into your yard. Rattlesnake bites are rare, and usually occur when humans provoke the snake.

“In Arizona, more than 200 people are bitten by rattlesnakes in the typical year. Only a small percentage of victims die.” - *Arizona Daily Star*



A western diamondback rattlesnake coils on a road.

Snakebite Do's & Don'ts

Let's say you've just been bitten by a rattlesnake. Here's what you want to do and more importantly, what you don't want to do.

Do:

- Seek medical attention immediately!
- Remove anything that may constrict circulation
- If the bite is on an arm or leg, keep the extremity straight and elevate it
- Identify snake if possible and from a safe distance

Don't

- Apply a tourniquet
- Cut open the wound or apply pressure to it
- Attempt to suck the venom out
- Heat or cool wound
- Attempt to catch or kill the snake

- www.imba.com

Snakebite Stats

Ever wonder who gets bit the most by rattlesnakes and why? The answer to that is males between the ages of 18 and 28 years old who usually are intoxicated, and are trying to handle the rattlesnake. Here are some other interesting snakebite statistics:

- In children under 20 years old: males are bitten three times more than females
- In adults over 20 years old: males are bitten twice as much as females
- The cost of a single vial of rattlesnake antivenom is \$2,000 to \$2,300.
- The average number of vials per victim is 12.
- When you add in the cost of the hospital care, a bite case can cost easily over \$50,000.
- Antivenom is made by taking venom from the snake, diluting it, and injecting it into a horse, sheep or goat, which then produces antibodies that are harvested and used to treat snakebite victims.

- *Statistics from the Arizona Poison and Drug Information Center*