

### BULLSNAKE IDENTIFICATION:

- Neck is the same width as the head, and has round pupils;
- Upper side yellowish or cream with numerous dark or black blotches; scales on upper back keeled.
- They can grow much longer than rattlesnakes reaching up to 100 inches, but rarely more than 71 inches.
- They are rattlesnake imposters because they will also coil up and shake their tail, while making a rattle sound.

### LIFE FACTS:

- They are distributed throughout most of Colorado at elevations below about 8,500 feet, mostly below 7,000 feet and are very common.
- They occupy a variety of habitats and most activity takes place on the ground or in burrows, but these capable climbers sometimes ascend high into trees.
- Diet consists primarily of rodents and other small mammals or birds. This makes them a welcome addition to any property.
- Bullsnares are constrictors that kill their prey by simply squeezing them to death.

This brochure is provided by:



**BOULDER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**  
**ANIMAL CONTROL UNIT**  
5600 Flatiron Parkway  
Boulder, CO 80301  
Dispatch: 303-441-4444

Snakes cause a number of concerns and conflicts for humans. Information on how to solve conflicts with snakes can be obtained through:

**Colorado State University Extension**  
[www.ext.colostate.edu](http://www.ext.colostate.edu)

Information and pictures for this brochure were provided by:

**The Colorado Division of Wildlife**  
[www.wildlife.state.co.us](http://www.wildlife.state.co.us)

PRAIRIE RATTLESNAKE



**DO YOU KNOW WHICH  
SNAKE IS A  
RATTLESNAKE?**

BULLSNAKE



There are over 30 different species of snakes coexisting with us in this wonderful state. Of those 30 species there are only 2 species of snakes that are venomous according to the Colorado Division of Wildlife. This informational brochure is meant to help you distinguish between a venomous rattlesnake and a very common imposter called a Bullsnake.



## WESTERN OR PRAIRIE RATTLESNAKE

*(Crotalus viridis)*

### IDENTIFICATION:

- Horny rattle or button on end of tail;



- When threatened with danger they will usually coil their body up and shake their tail, which creates a buzzing sound.
- Head much broader than the neck;



- Pit on each side of face between (but lower than) eye and nostril;
- Upper side usually blotched; upper scales keeled (have a ridge down the center);
- Pupil vertically elongated (like a cat's) in bright light.
- They can reach up to 48 inches, but are rarely greater than 39 inches long.

### LIFE FACTS:

- They are throughout most of Colorado, except the high mountains, reaching an upper elevational limit of 7,500–9,500 feet in different areas of the state.
- They occupy virtually every terrestrial habitat and take shelter in crevices, woodpiles, brushy vegetation, or mammal burrows.
- Typical food items include small mammals, lizards, occasional birds

and spadefoot toads, and sometimes carrion. Prey are ambushed or obtained by active foraging.

- Rattlesnakes subdue prey by striking them quickly with a venomous bite. The venom stuns or kills the prey immediately.

### OTHER FACTS:

- Given an opportunity to escape, snakes will choose flight over fight.
- There are more people killed by lightning and bee stings than by snakebites.
- Colorado State Statutes provide that "any person may kill rattlesnakes when necessary to protect life or property" [33-6-107(9), C.R.S.].
- **PLEASE USE CAUTION AROUND ANY SNAKE YOU FIND.**



## BULLSNAKE OR GOPHER SNAKE

*(Pituophis catenifer)*