

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **If I see a snake will their be a protective parent snake around?**

No. Australian snakes are developed enough to survive on their own from day one and adult snakes do not exhibit parental care. Adult males leave the female after mating and the female leaves the young almost immediately after birth (for live bearing snakes) or after laying the eggs (for egg laying snakes). The only Australian snakes known to exhibit maternal care are Carpet Pythons. They coil around the clutch of eggs to incubate them until they hatch, leaving them soon after.

### **If I see a baby snake does this mean I have an infestation?**

No. Snakes approximately have between 3 and 40 young. After birth or hatching the young disperse in all different directions and do not remain together. Although possible, it would be rare to see more than one juvenile unless you stumbled across the live birth or hatching site within an hour or two of the event.

### **Are all snakes venomous?**

No, not all snakes are venomous.

Queensland is home to about 120 species of snakes. About 65% of these are venomous. Venom production is a characteristic of two groups of snakes; the front-fanged snakes (Elapids) and some of the rear-fanged snakes (colubrids).

The elapids consist of some of the Australia's most well known venomous land snakes such as the Taipan, Eastern Brown and Tiger Snake.

Our only venomous Colubrid snake, is the Brown Tree Snake, producing weak venom delivered through fangs at the back of the mouth. Venom toxicity is mild and venom delivery is poor, as such these snakes do not pose a threat to human life. Other species of colubrid snakes, including the common tree snake and Keelback, do not have fangs or venom, only small teeth.

Pythons such as the well known Carpet Python completely lack venom and fangs. They do however have numerous sharp recurved teeth designed for holding onto prey. A bite from a Python is painful and can inflict deep lacerations. For more information on which local snakes are venomous, please see our **snake identification** page at **[SNAKE ID](#)**

### **Are snakes territorial?**

No, to refer to an animal as territorial you are grouping them with animals that patrol and defend an area they mark out as their territory. Australian snakes do not do this, nor do they exhibit territorial behaviour. If you wander into a snake's home range it will not attack you as a lion might. The only thing a snake will defend is its own safety against a would-be predator, which is how they can perceive humans if we are too close.

Snakes live within what we call a "home range" meaning they move around within an area of up to a few kilometres squared (depending on the species) which they have several sites they frequent for food and shelter. A snake will only stick around if you have suitable habitat, shelter and a good food source. If any of these commodities do not sustain the snake's requirements they will leave in search of a better location.

### **Do snakes hibernate in Australia?**

No. The Australian climate is not cold enough for hibernation however snakes do Brumate. Brumation is a form of dormancy in reptiles that is similar to hibernation. It differs from

hibernation in the metabolic processes involved. Reptiles generally begin brumation in late autumn (more specific times depend on the species). They often wake up to drink water and return to "sleep". They can go for months without food. Reptiles may want to eat more than usual before the brumation time but eat less or refuse food as the temperature drops. However, they do need to drink water. The brumation period is anywhere from one to eight months depending on the air temperature and the size, age, and health of the reptile. During the first year of life, many small reptiles do not fully brumate, but rather slow down and eat less often. Brumation is triggered by lack of heat and the decrease in the hours of daylight in winter, similar to hibernation.