

Whip snakes

Demansia olivacea, Demansia papuensis, Demansia atra, Demansia psammophis, Demansia simplex and Demansia torquata

Other names: olive or marble-headed whip snake, greater black whip snake, lesser black whip snake, black whip snake, yellow-faced whip snake, grey whip snake and collared whip snake

Description

Whip snakes are very slender snakes with long tails. They have quite toxic venom however they are usually unable to inject a large quantity into victims. Whip snakes will generally retreat rather than attack unless provoked. Species average adult total lengths vary from 90 -165cm. In the Northern Territory there are six species of whip snakes. Colours of different species vary from yellowish to red to dark brown and grey. The collared whip snake has a distinctive dark band across its neck.

Distribution

Whip snakes are generally found in dry open habitats in most of Australia. In the Northern Territory whip snakes inhabit nearly all regions from the arid interior to the north coast.

Regional Abundance

Darwin - Common, Katherine - Common, Alice Springs - Found in parts.

Diet and Reproduction

The diet of whip snakes usually consists mainly of lizards with some frogs and insects also included. The whip snake moves very fast, attacking with a burst of speed and it relies on locating prey by sight. Whip snakes are egglayers with the greater black whip snake laying clutches of up to 20 eggs.



Barritt and May