



SNAKES AT BRISBANE AIRPORT

Version 2 | 1 October 2024



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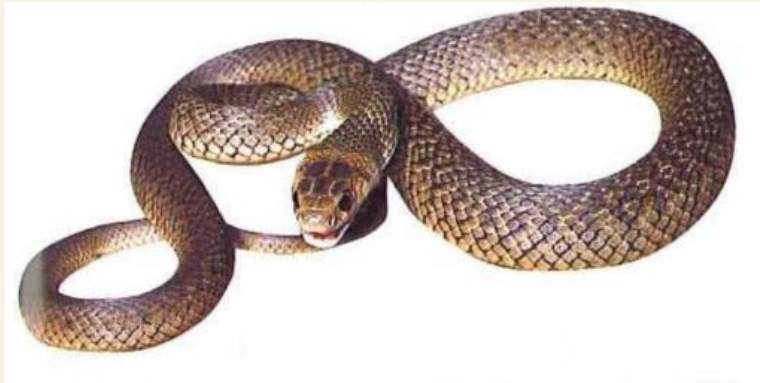
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1. DANGEROUSLY VENOMOUS SNAKES

Eastern Brown Snake (*Pseudonaja textilis*)

- Total length: 2.2m
- Colour ranges through shades of brown to almost black, often with paler head
- Most often seen in the mown grasslands of the Airfield
- Active during the day
- Venom is strongly neurotoxic (affects the peripheral nervous system, causing drowsiness, paralysis and difficulty in breathing) and hemotoxic (affects the blood by increasing clotting or bleeding)
- Second most toxic land snake venom known responsible for many human deaths
- Rears up and strikes repeatedly, if Provoked
- Apply first aid and seek urgent medical attention for all suspected bites

Dangerously Venomous



Red bellied black snake (*Pseudechis porphyriacus*)

- Total length: 1.5-2m
- Glossy black above and dull to bright red lower flanks, with red to pink belly
- Probably Brisbane Airport's most common snake
- Largely found in the canal area
- Active during the day
- Venom is strongly hemotoxic (affects the blood by either increasing clotting or bleeding) and cytotoxic (having to do with the destruction of cells)
- Seek urgent medical attention for all suspected bites



Dangerously Venomous



2. VENOMOUS SNAKES

Marsh Snake / Black Bellied Swamp Snake (*Hemiaspis signata*)

- Total length: 70cm
- Two narrow pale stripes on each side of face, dark belly
- Dark brown to grey, often with pale yellow flush on head
- Facial stripes prominent
- Active during the day
- Eats frogs and reptiles
- Found within thick vegetation

Venomous but not dangerous



White Crowned Snake (*Cacophis harriettae*)

- Total length: 50cm
- Broad white band surrounding dark patch on top of head
- Body glossy dark grey to black above and below
- Lives in compost heaps, moist sheltered areas

Venomous but not dangerous

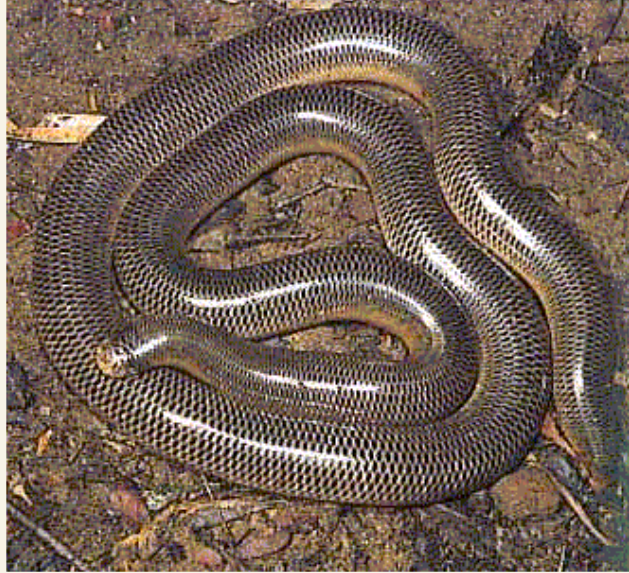


3. NON-VENOMOUS SNAKES

Blind Snake (*Ramphotyphlops nigrescens*)

- Total length: 75 cm
- Small, skinny and very shiny
- Gives off an unpleasant odour when disturbed
- Lives in soil and leaf litter
- They do not have eyes
- Eats ants and termites

Non-venomous



Carpet Python (*Morelia spilota*)

- Total length: 2.5-3.6m
- Amongst Queensland's most familiar snakes
- Have prominent blotches, bands or stripes
- Extremely variable patterns
- Active at night

Non-venomous. Although has sharp teeth for biting mice, rats, possums etc.



Green Tree Snake/Common Tree Snake (*Dendrelaphis punctulata*)

- Total length: 1.2m
- Slender build
- Olive brown to dark grey back, yellow belly
- Scales can be edged with blue
- Eats frogs
- Active during the day

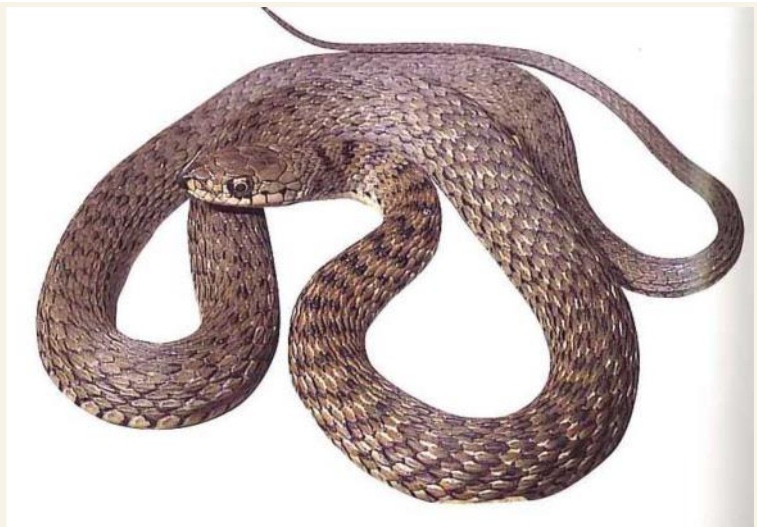
Non-venomous



Keelback/Freshwater Snake (*Tropidonophis mairii*)

- Total length: 93cm
- Often mistaken for the highly venomous Eastern Brown
- Strongly keeled, matt textured scales
- Typically grey to brown or olive with a mix of dark blotches or broken bands, pale flecks
- Belly cream with dark edges to scales
- Lives near creeks or in low lying areas
- Feeds on frogs and successfully preys on small cane toads

Non-venomous



4. SNAKEBITES

All snakes attempt to avoid biting humans, but many will do so in defence if they are deliberately provoked or accidentally disturbed. It is usually easy to avoid being bitten. Most bites occur when people attempt to taunt, catch or kill snakes.

Snakes will always give an 'aggressor' a chance to retreat. Several potentially dangerous species adopt characteristic defensive postures:

- Black snakes flatten the heads and hiss and feint frantically
- Eastern Brown Snakes 'stand up' in a distinctive 'S' position and strike repeatedly

However, some species give little warning before biting and the move from defensive posture to a warning or full bite can take place rapidly, sometimes with little provocation.

4.1 First Aid:

Treat any case of snakebite, or suspected snakebite, as a medical emergency. Apply first aid and call 000 and Aviation Rescue & Fire Fighting (available 24 hours on 3860 3299) immediately.

General Principles:

DO NOT use an arterial tourniquet when treating snakebite

DO NOT wash or clean the bite site

DO NOT elevate the bite site

Close observation of the casualty is necessary and, if breathing or circulation fails, resuscitation must be commenced.

4.2 Specific First Aid Treatment:

1. Immediately apply a firm pressure bandage over the bite. Then apply another bandage from the tips of the fingers or toes, back along the limb to cover as much of the limb as possible.
2. The bandage should be as tight as one applied to a sprained ankle.
3. Keep the limb as still as possible. Do not elevate the limb. After applying the pressure bandage, immobilise the limb by binding a splint to it (for example, use the good leg as a splint and bind the legs together). If the bite is on the hand or forearm, put the splinted forearm in a sling or splint to the body.
4. It is safe to leave pressure bandages in place until anti-venom is available. Leave the splint and bandage (pressure-immobilisation technique) on until medical aid is reached.

Example application of pressure bandage for snake bites:



5. WHAT TO DO IF I SEE A SNAKE:

If a snake is found in the workplace and is unable to escape from the area and/or will continue to place employees, tenants, contractors, or members of the public at risk, take the following actions:

- Do not attempt to identify the snake – treat all snakes as venomous.
- Do not attempt to catch or kill the snake.
- Warn other persons in the area of the snake's presence.
- If possible, try to maintain visual contact with the snake so the snake handler can easily locate it for capture and removal.
- Contact the relevant department within BAC for any snake removals, they are as follows
 - Terminals airside – BAC Team Leader 0402 971 098
 - Terminals landside – BAC Airport Duty Manager 0412 052 977
 - All other locations on BAC land – BAC reception 3406 3000
- Direct contact for BAC's approved snake handler is:
Brisbane Snake Removal Services 0409 675 522

6. Further Reading

- Queensland Museum www.qm.qld.gov.au
- Australian Museum www.amonline.net.au
- Queensland Ambulance Service www.ambulance.qld.gov.au