

Corn Snake

Corn Snake - *State Endangered Species* - Pl.16 (*Elaphe guttata guttata*)

Identification: 24" - 72". The Corn Snake is also known as the Red Rat Snake. This is a long snake, with a flat belly and flat sides (like a loaf of bread). Ground color is orange, brown or gray. Orange, red or brown blotches outlined in black run down the middle of the back, with smaller blotches on the sides. Some individuals may have stripes rather than blotches. The head is marked with a blotch shaped like a spearpoint, which splits towards the neck. The underside is white, marked with large black squares on the belly and stripes on the underside of the tail. Scales are smooth on most of the body and weakly keeled on a few middorsal rows; anal plate is divided.

Where to find them: This species is very rare in New Jersey. It is typically found in sandy, forested areas, as in the New Jersey Pine Barrens. The Corn Snake prefers pine-oak forests with an understory of low brush. It can be found in hollow logs, railroad ties, and foundations of old buildings as well as under boards and logs.

When to find them: Active May through September. Mostly nocturnal, especially during the hot summer months.

Range: Southern Region: Ocean, Atlantic, southeastern Burlington, and northeastern Cumberland Counties.

Conservation Status: Corn Snakes were listed as an endangered species in New Jersey in 1984, the victim of severe habitat loss and illegal collecting for the pet trade. This species has fairly specialized habitat requirements, making them especially vulnerable to habitat loss and fragmentation.

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(*Elaphe guttata guttata*) - text pg. 25



Key Features

- Red or orange blotches on back that are outlined in black.
- Belly is checkered with black on white.
- Scales weakly keeled.



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Excerpt from: "Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of New Jersey"
Order the complete guide at - <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/products.htm>