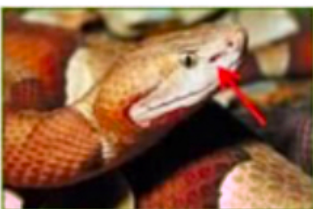


Commonly Confused Snake Species of Southeastern Kentucky

VENOMOUS



Facial Pit

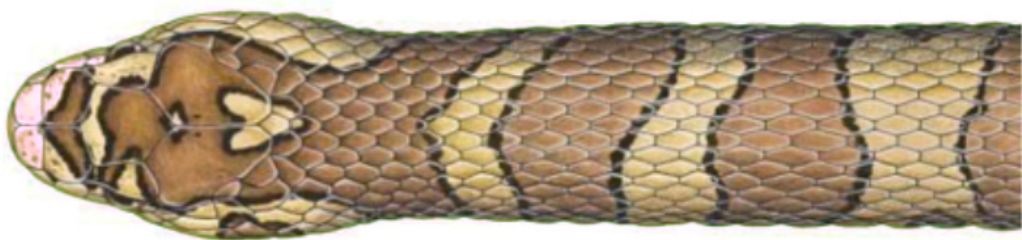
Copperhead

Agkistrodon contortrix

- *Adults range from 24 to 36 inches long.
- *The young have yellow-tipped tails.
- *Often found in wooded areas, rocky hillsides, abandoned wood piles or rotting logs, and low-lying areas near streams.
- *Especially active in the fall.
- *Most likely encountered by hikers.
- *Most recognizable for their distinct reddish-brown color, hourglass-shaped bands, and their distinctly triangular, copper-colored head.
- *Eyes have elliptical pupils (cat-like).

The Northern Water Snake and the Eastern Milk Snake are commonly confused for Copperheads in Kentucky. As a result of this mistaken identity, these two harmless and very beneficial snakes are often targeted and killed. Despite the many Kentuckians who think they know the difference, 30 years of phone calls to our office from customers claiming to have Copperheads has proven very much untrue. Education is key and uneducated individuals will confuse these three snakes, misidentify them and kill the harmless ones in their uneducated quest to reduce Copperheads. Don't be that Kentuckian; educate yourself!

NONVENOMOUS



Eastern Milk Snake

Lampropeltis triangulum

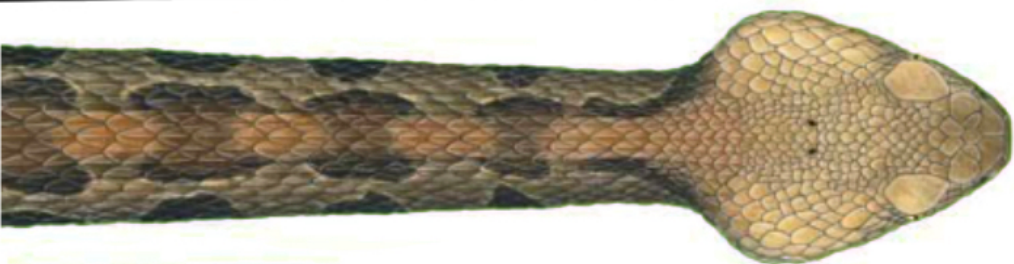
- *Adults range from 24 to 36 inches long.
- *Often found in fields, rocky areas, and forests.
- *Most recognizable by a Y or V on top of its head (in this picture it's a V that resembles a heart-shape), and a tapered tail. Usually has bands of red/brown/black covering the body with a black and white-checked underbelly.
- *Eyes have round pupils.



Northern Water Snake

Nerodia sipedon

- *Adults range from 24 to 42 inches long.
- *Found in or near freshwater.
- *Most recognizable by dark bands down the slender body, and the narrow head. Colors can range from brown, reddish, gray, or even black.
- *Eyes have round pupils.



Facial Pit

Timber Rattlesnake

Crotatus horridus

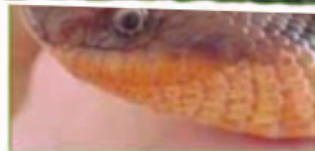
- *Adults range from 36 to 54 inches long (some reports of longer).
- *Found in wooded areas, deciduous forests, and areas of rough terrain.
- *Most likely encountered by hikers.
- *Most recognizable for their rattle, a triangular-shaped head, and their unusually thicker bodies.
- *Usually have brown or black bands down their backs and are yellowish in color.
- *Eyes have elliptical pupils (cat-like).



Eastern Hognose

Heterodon platirhinos

- *Adults range from 18 to 45 inches long.
- *Often found in woodlands with dry sandy areas.
- *Most recognizable by an upturned snout as seen in the image to the right.
- *Colors vary from greenish, gray, brown, black, orange, reddish, and may or may not have distinct contrasting blotches or patterns.
- *When threatened, this snake flattens its neck and brings its head up off the ground, sometimes resembling a venomous snake like tge timber rattlesnake.
- *Eyes have round pupils.



Kentucky's four native venomous snakes (Copperhead, Timber rattlesnake, Cottonmouth, and Pygmy Rattlesnake) all have elliptical eyes. This is not always a clear indicator, however, since non-native species could be present.