

# VENOMOUS SNAKES OF GEORGIA

presents: Venomous Voice: Volume 11.6  
September through late October

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## COPPERHEAD WARNING!!



This is it folks - for the next 4 - 6 weeks **more Copperhead babies will be born than at any other time of year.** So I am dedicating volume 11.6 strictly to them.

In the Southern United States there is no more often mis-identified snake than the copperhead. For most people if it doesn't have a rattle and is not a solid color it **MUST** be a copperhead. Georgia is home to over 40 different snake species (only 6 are venomous). Some species depending on age and stage of development can have drastic differences in appearance. Juveniles can look different than they look as adults. Adult copperheads give "live" birth to 6 to over a dozen babies at one time (depends largely on size of female).



The Copperhead (*Agkistrodon contortrix*) is by far the most wide spread and healthy populated venomous snake of Georgia (and the U.S.). **They flourish ALL over Georgia** (except some southern counties bordering Florida). There are five sub-species of copperhead; Since many share overlapping territories they will often cross breed. It is more likely to find one with traits from several sub-species. The good news is that all Georgia's copperheads are close enough in appearance. If you can learn to identify one, you can easily identify all. **Most will have a light tan/brown color overlaid by darker cross bands that look like hour glasses or Hershey kisses (from the side)(note: not all will have a copper colored head).**

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**If you would like to receive **Snake Warnings** for your area contact me at [GeorgiaVenomous@Gmail.com](mailto:GeorgiaVenomous@Gmail.com) to be added to our mailing list.**

**This is a FREE service brought to you by **Venomous Snakes of Georgia.****

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Copperheads are thick bodied snakes reaching adult lengths of 2-3 feet in the wild. Copperheads in captivity may grow to longer lengths. Some as long as 48 inches (but this is uncommon). They adapt well to just about any topography Georgia has and don't seem to mind the presence of other snakes. In fact, they have been found burmating ("hibernating") with rattlesnake species in the same dens. **So if you have one on your property you most likely have more.**

**FREE** Snake Removal for Cherokee and  
Pickens County.

**770-479-0329 ofc or 404-574-3185 cell**

(Other counties maybe charged fuel and travel fees.)





Many of the Copperhead Snakes pictured in this issue were successfully removed and relocated.

Special thanks to all of those that called and gave wildlife a chance!!!





Copperheads are pit-vipers having loreal pits just below the nostrils. These pits are more or less heat sensors capable of detecting changes in temperature less than one degree. Sometimes when we are flipping over rocks, reaching into a wood pile, picking up leaves, etc. our fingers might give off a similar heat signature as a small rodent. If the rest of our bodies are blocked by the rock or trashcan lid, etc a copperhead may mistake our fingers as food. The copperhead is an opportunistic predator and would often strike at such an easy meal. So be very careful where you put your fingers and look before you reach. When lifting something it's always best to use a tool and not your fingers. Always lift the side furthest away from you up first. This will put a natural barrier between you and anything that might be hiding underneath.



**DANGER!!**



Copperheads cause more bites in the wild in this country than any other venomous snake. They often

strike and bolt in random directions when frightened or trying to escape (sometimes toward you). Copperheads are not ill-tempered and would prefer escape more often than fighting a larger predator. One reason bites might occur more often than other U.S. species is because, they have some of the most effective natural camouflage than any other U.S. venomous snake and we just simply don't see them. **BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS - WATCH WHERE YOU PUT HANDS AND FEET.** If you are bitten by a Copperhead (or any venomous snake) get to the closest medical facility as soon as possible.

## **DO NOT WASTE TIME TRYING TO KILL OR CAPTURE THE SNAKE.**

With anti-venin, death from a copperhead is extremely rare. The most common result to a moderate copperhead envenomation is amputation. **So by wasting time trying to kill or capture the snake could mean the difference in losing your finger or losing your hand or arm.** The **DOCTORS DO NOT NEED TO SEE OR HAVE THE SNAKE TO TREAT YOU.** A doctor will treat you based on the symptoms you are experiencing at the time you are in their care. Anti-venin is the only thing that can stop further damage caused by snake venom. The sooner you get this the better you will be. You risk getting bit a second or third time trying to kill or capture the snake. The less venom in you the better. **TIME IS YOUR TISSUE!!** Remember most people are bitten at home (76%), trying to kill the snake.

Call a professional to remove it. They can also find more that might be in the area and advise you on how to make your property less snake appealing.

**Free snake removal for Cherokee & Pickens  
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**770-479-0329 ofc 404-574-3185 cell**



## First Aid for Snake Bites:

(If within an hour from the hospital)

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**DO NOT** apply a tourniquet or pressure bandage.

**DO NOT** cut or suck venom from the bite area.

**DO NOT** apply ice or heat to bite area (there will most likely be swelling. This is a swelling resulting from fluid build up in the body and can not be controlled by cold or heat. **Applying cold will further restrict blood flow and will cause additional tissue damage.**

**DO NOT** use electricity or any topical antiseptic that would effect coagulation (such as alcohol or hydrogen peroxide).

**DO NOT** drink alcohol beverages.

**DO NOT** waste time finding/killing the snake. **All the native venomous snakes in North Georgia can be treated with one type of anti-venin so identification of the snake is NOT necessary.**

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**Do move away from the snake.**

**Do** call 911 and or get to the ER as quick as possible.

**Do** try to limit unnecessary movement. You can immobilize the bitten limb on the way to the ER.

**Do** remove any watches, rings, bracelets, restrictive clothing, belts, tight shoe laces, etc. These will restrict blood flow as the body starts to swell and will cause further tissue damage.

**Do** note the time and location of the bite.

**Do** keep bitten limb in neutral position to the heart.

**Do** let the Paramedics know if you are taking any blood/heart medications, strokes, heart attacks, pace maker, and if you are allergic to any medications, horses, sheep or papaya.

**Do** try and stay as calm as you can. Fatalities in the United States are less than 1% from snake envenomations. You have a 99% chance of surviving.

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God Bless and have a safe Fall!!

- Patrick

If you would like to be added to our mailing list to receive FREE Snake Warning please contact us at

[georgiavenomous@gmail.com](mailto:georgiavenomous@gmail.com)

The information included in this letter is suggestive and should not replace the advice of a medical doctor. ALWAYS get medical attention and consult a licenced doctor immediately if you think you have been envenomated.