

## **Rattlesnakes in Muskoka: Tread Lightly! They are a ‘threatened’ (at risk) species, rarely a threat to humans and need our protection.**



There have not been any deaths related to a **Massasauga Rattlesnake** in Ontario in the past 50 years and there are only a few bites reported each year in the Parry Sound Muskoka region. If you are bitten by this snake, you should contact poison control immediately.

### **What you can do**

#### **Report a sighting**

- [Report a sighting](#) of an endangered animal or plant to the Natural Heritage Information Centre. Photographs with specific locations or mapping coordinates are always helpful.
- the Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas also collects observations of all Ontario reptiles and amphibians. Submit your observations at: [www.ontarionature.org/atlas](http://www.ontarionature.org/atlas).
- Georgian Bay Cares at (705) 955-4284 who may be able to relocate it

#### **Volunteer**

Volunteer with your local nature club or provincial park to participate in surveys or stewardship work focused on species at risk.

#### **Be a good steward**

- private land owners have a very important role to play in species recovery; you may be eligible for stewardship programs that support the protection and recovery of species at risk and their habitats

- every year, snakes all over the province must cross busy roads; watch for snakes on the road, especially between May and October when they are most active
- appreciate snakes and don't harm them; sadly, people continue to deliberately kill snakes
- keep the danger of snakes in perspective: all of Ontario's snakes are non-venomous, except for the very rare Massasauga
- take a few easy steps to protect yourself while hiking in known Massasauga habitat (e.g., the Bruce Peninsula); wear leather hiking boots and loose-fitting long pants; when in Massasauga habitat, always watch where you are walking and never reach into areas that you cannot see
- if you come across a snake, please don't try to capture it, handle it or kill it; snakes can be delicate and improper handling can cause serious injury; also, certain species are protected under legislation, which makes it illegal to harass, harm or kill them - be respectful and observe from a distance
- if you are bitten by a Massasauga, remain calm and call emergency services; never try to catch or kill the snake; it is unnecessary, dangerous and illegal

### **Report illegal activity**

- report any illegal activity related to plants and wildlife to [1-877-TIPSMNR \(8477667\)](tel:1-877-TIPSMNR)
- never buy snakes that have been caught in the wild and never buy a native species of any kind that's being sold as a pet

Excerpted from:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/massasauga-rattlesnake>