



# Eastern Hog-nosed Snake

## *Heterodon platirhinos*

### Curve Lake First Nation Species at Risk

#### Curve Lake First Nation Species at Risk

23 Winookeedaa Road  
Curve Lake First Nation  
Government Service and  
Cultural Centre  
Curve Lake First Nation,  
Ontario K0L1R0

Phone: 705-657-8045

Fax: 705-657-8708

E-mail: [k\\_coppaway@yahoo.ca](mailto:k_coppaway@yahoo.ca)

**Features:** The Eastern Hog-nosed snake (*Heterodon platirhinos*) is sometimes mistaken for a cobra because when it is threatened it rears back and flattens its neck out. It may strike out if harassed but rarely bites, and it is non-venomous. It gets its common name from long scales on its nose which give it an upturned snout. Old individuals can be one metre long and their bodies are thick. They prefer sandy, well-drained habitats such as beaches and dry woods because this is where they lay their eggs in burrows and where they hibernate. But they must have access to wet areas such as swamps to hunt frogs, toads and lizards.

**Status:** Threatened Provincially and Nationally

**Range:** The species is widespread south of the Great Lakes and east of the Rockies, but it is not common anywhere. In Ontario, it is found in southern and central Ontario as far north as Lake Nipissing.

**Threats:** The species is at the northern limits of its range in Ontario and was likely never common here. Historic declines were probably due to loss of habitat from development and farming, and persecution by people. These factors continue as threats today and slow recovery of the species in Ontario.

**Protection:** Under Ontario's *Endangered Species Act 2007*, it is illegal to harass, capture, buy, sell, possess, or kill the Eastern Hog-nosed Snake. This species is also protected under Ontario's *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*. Some populations in Ontario are on public land such as provincial parks where they receive habitat protection. Education on this harmless species is important, and has paid off in Pinery Provincial Park where staff have implemented a public education program and report that fewer snakes are being killed by visitors.

Text Sources: [Schueler 1996](#)