Be Aware: Rattlesnakes Live in This Area

The prairies and foothills of Colorado provide habitat for a diversity of wildlife, including several species of snakes. Most snakes you see are not poisonous; however, an encounter with a rattlesnake can be dangerous - take precautions.

To avoid an encounter, stay aware of your surroundings, and follow these tips:

• Never put your hand or foot where you can't see. Look before you step over logs or rocks.

• Most snake sightings occur on summer mornings or evenings. Snakes are most active at temperatures between 50 and 80 F. Watch for snakes sunning on sidewalks and trails.

• Avoid places where rattlesnakes are likely to rest. During the day, snakes often seek cooler, shaded places when they are too hot. Avoid crevices, woodpiles, bushes and shrubs, and small animal burrows.

• Wear leather boots. Rattlesnakes usually can’t bite through leather.

• If you see a snake, leave it alone. Most snake bites occur when people try to catch them. Back away slowly and give the snake an easy escape route.

If bitten by a rattlesnake, call 911 and get medical help immediately.

Take a close look at these pictures to see the differences between rattlesnakes and bullsnakes.

Western Prairie Rattlesnake

Bullsnake

Rattlesnakes:
- the only poisonous (venomous) snakes native to Colorado
- triangular-shaped head and usually have rattles on their tails

Bullsnakes:
- are not poisonous, but can be mistaken for rattlesnakes
- may shake tail like rattlesnakes or hiss
- pointed tail end will never have rattles