

Supporting Snakes: What if I See a Snake?

Snakes are an important part of our ecosystems as they get rid of pest species including mice, rats, slugs, and occasionally insects. Without snakes controlling these pest species, our lives would be a lot more challenging.

Utah is home to many different animals including 30 species of snake. Most of the snakes in Utah are non-venomous and cannot harm humans. There are also a few venomous snakes in Utah that may harm people or pets that get too close. If you ever see a snake in the wild, here are some helpful hints of what to do.

Leave It Alone

A snake never wants to bite a human on purpose. To a snake, a human is a large predator, and snakes want to be as far away from their predators as possible. Their first instinct is to slither away in the other direction. They only bite as a last resort, and most people in the US who are bitten by a snake are bitten on the hand because they picked up the snake. A snake will not “chase” a human as you are much faster than any snake, they just might be slithering away in your direction.



Back away slowly

If a snake does not slither away from you, it might coil up in a defensive posture. In any case, it is good to back away from the snake slowly so as not to scare it. Admire from a distance!

If you are ever bitten, make sure to get a description of the snake that bit you. If it is venomous or you are not sure, seek out medical assistance. If you know it is not venomous, just wash the bite area with soap and water.

