

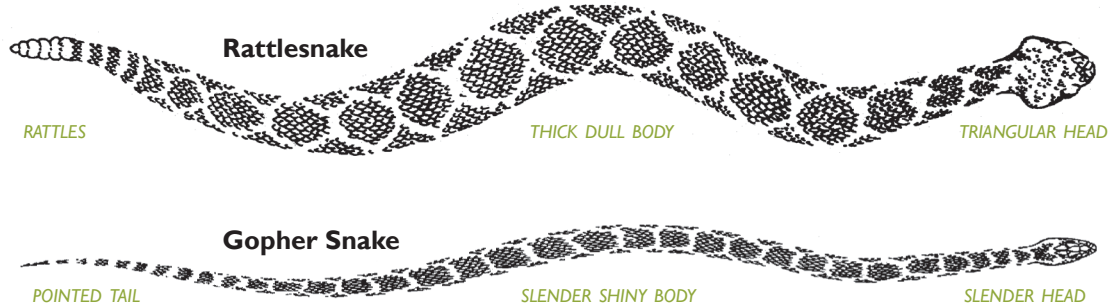
Wildlife Encounters

Snakes:

Although most snakes found in California are harmless, the Northern Pacific rattlesnake can wield a venomous bite if provoked. Its coloration allows it to blend in with the soil, providing excellent

Grazing Animals:

Cattle are large animals, weighing 1,000 pounds or more. While not aggressive by nature, if aggravated, cattle can respond in a potentially dangerous manner. If you encounter cattle on the trails, try not to



camouflage. Rattlesnakes and gopher snakes have similar coloration, so rattlesnakes are often mistaken for its harmless cousin. Therefore, use caution around any snake you see in the wild, and avoid handling it.

What to do if Bitten by a Snake:

If bitten by a rattlesnake, stay calm and send someone to call 9-1-1. The victim should remain calm by lying down with the affected limb lower than the heart. Wash the wound, if possible. (Rattlesnake bites are typically associated with intense, burning pain.)

If you are by yourself, walk calmly to the nearest source of help. **DO NOT RUN!**

If bitten by another kind of snake, wash the wound with soap and water or an antiseptic and seek medical attention.

startle them. Keep your distance and walk around groups, rather than through them. Don't get between a calf and its mother; they are protective of their young. Don't try to get close, touch, or pet them. Always keep your dog under control.

Wild Animals:

Coyote, bobcats, deer, elk, wild pigs, and mountain lions are occasionally spotted in the parks. Their normal reaction is to run away. Some have become used to our presence and will continue their activities while being watched. Never feed, try to approach, or pet wild animals. Keep pets and small children near you in wilderness areas. Because of their size, these animals could become dangerous should they be surprised or confronted, or if they begin to associate humans with food.

If you would like more information on wildlife to watch for, ask for brochures at the Visitor Centers.

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Ticks and Lyme Disease:

Lyme disease is an infectious disease transmitted by the bite of a tick. It may be treated and cured with early diagnosis, but if not properly treated it may persist in the body for years.

How to Avoid Ticks:

- Wear long pants, long sleeves, and closed-toe shoes in tick country.
- Tuck shirt into pants, and pants into socks.
- Stay on trails! Avoid brush and grassy areas.
- Use insect repellent on shoes, socks, and pants.

Check yourself, your children, and your pets for ticks thoroughly and frequently!

What Does a Tick Look Like?

Photo: UC Berkeley



MALE FEMALE

In California, the Western black-legged tick is the major carrier of Lyme disease. The adult female is reddish-brown with black

legs, about 1/8 inch long. Males are smaller and entirely brownish-black. Both are teardrop shaped.

What are the Symptoms of Lyme Disease?

Early symptoms may include a spreading rash accompanied by fever, aches, and/or fatigue.

What to Do if You Think You Have Been Bitten by a Tick:

- Pull the tick gently from the skin, using a tissue or tweezers (not with bare hands).
- Scrape (a credit card works!) to remove any mouthparts left behind.
- Wash hands and the tick bite with soap and water; apply antiseptic to the bite.

Prompt removal of ticks may prevent disease transmission. See a physician immediately if you think you have found a tick attached to your skin and you have any of the above symptoms.

Poison Oak:

Poison oak is common in California. It grows as a shrub or as a vine, sometimes reaching up into the tops of trees. The glossy leaves grow in groups of threes, and change from light green in the spring to pink or red in the summer. The “poison” is the oil found throughout the plant. Even if it does not have leaves, touching the stem can cause a reaction on the skin. Avoiding poison oak is the best way to avoid any problems caused by it. Staying on the trail will help avoid contact. If you do come in



contact with poison oak, wash immediately with soap and water. Calamine lotion relieves itching. If the rash spreads, see a physician.

Remember
“Leaves of three,
let it be; if it’s
hairy, it’s a berry.”