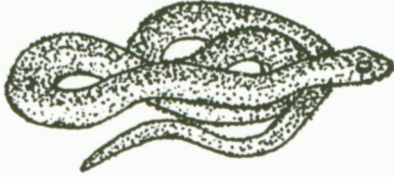


THE SMOOTH GREEN SNAKE



eastern green (smooth)

The Smooth Green Snake runs in length from 11 7/8 inches to 20 inches with the record being 26 inches (30.3 to 66 cm). It is bright green above and white to yellow on its underside. Shortly after death, their colour changes to blue and this should be kept in mind when reporting locations of sightings. The young hatch from eggs and are 3 5/16 inches to 6 1/2 inches (8.4 to 16.5 cm.) The eggs are laid when they are fairly advanced in development and thus the hatching time is relatively short.

These snakes are quite secretive and tend to be active at night. They are often found under cover such as logs, boards, flat stones, and older building debris. Very little is known about the

occurrence of this snake on Prince Edward Island and readers are encouraged to send in sightings and habitat information. This snake is thought to be primarily terrestrial (i.e. not climbing trees) in upland habitats. Its food sources are primarily insects and spiders. Its close relative, the Rough Green Snake (*O. aestivus*) is an excellent climber.

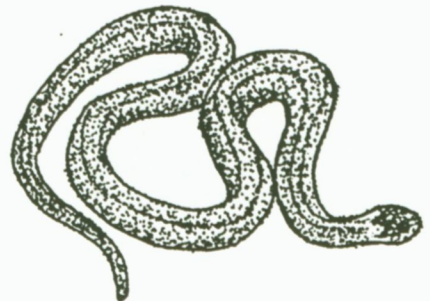
The Smooth Green Snake feeds on spiders, caterpillars, grasshoppers, crickets, other soft-bodied insects, slugs, snails, and earthworms. Like the garter snakes, they can flatten their bodies when alarmed and they may release an exudate from its anal scent glands when handled.

As with the garter snake, the young are born live.

NORTHERN REDBELLY SNAKE

The Redbelly Snake is a member of the brown snakes genus, a group of small secretive snakes. It is usually characterized by a plain red belly and three pale-coloured nape spots but this species is quite variable in colour. The back is normally brown although sometimes gray to black and it may display four faint narrow dark stripes or a central fairly light stripe. The belly is usually bright red but can range from blue-black in occasional specimens to orange to yellow. The definitive characteristic is that there are 15 rows of keeled scales and the anal scale is divided. This species ranges in length to a maximum of 16 inches (40.4 cm.) in some parts of its range but the largest specimen recorded by Cook (1967) was 8 1/2 inches (21.4 cm).

Again, as with the Smooth Green Snake, little is known of the distribution of the Redbelly Snake on the Island. They are thought to frequent grassy clearings, meadows, and bushy areas, particularly where it is damp. Sightings and the habitat in which they occur should be reported to the editor of the Island Naturalist. This species is thought to be associated with open woodlands ranging from sphagnum bogs to uplands.



red-bellied