

WILDLIFE AND OTHER NATURAL HAZARDS

WARNING:

THERE IS TO BE NO FOOD, SODA, SMELLABLES ETC. STORED IN ANY TENT OVERNIGHT. ALL FOOD MUST BE CONSUMED OR PLACED IN A TRASH CONTAINER EACH EVENING.

WILDLIFE AT THE SUMMIT

The Summit is home to a variety of wildlife and natural hazards. All participants and staff need to be alert to these hazards and know what to do in the event of a wildlife situation. Never feed any wild animals and maintain a safe distance even from seemingly harmless animals. While here, participants will get a chance to see deer, turkey, reptiles, fish, birds, insects, and other creatures. While far less commonly spotted, black bears are present on the site. Respect for wildlife and the habitat we share with them at The Summit is important during your stay. A crucial part of keeping a positive relationship to the wildlife at The Summit is how we store and handle food at camp. Any food should be secured in a personal vehicle or with Summit staff. The Summit has secure storage for shelf stable supplemental food. Please alert staff upon check-in that you have food that needs secured.

GARBAGE AT THE SUMMIT

Throughout the site you will see trash receptacles designed to be bear proof. Please use these to dispose of any garbage you may have and use recycling receptacles as indicated for items able to be recycled. All garbage must be placed in dumpsters at the end of each evening.

NOTE Do not deposit food waste into shower house trash receptacles as they ARE NOT bear proof and will bring unwanted bear activity into your campsite.

POTENTIAL WILDERNESS HAZARDS INCLUDE:

- 🐾 Copperheads
- 🐾 Eastern Timber Rattlesnakes
- 🐾 Water Moccasins
- 🐾 Black Bears
- 🐾 Deer Ticks
- 🐾 Stinging insects (Biting Flies and Mosquitoes.)
- 🐾 Poisonous plants

SNAKES

Avoid tall grassy areas, areas with surface rock, and wet areas. Stay on trails. Do not approach any snake and treat all snakes as poisonous. If bitten, have the victim lay prone and rest quietly to reduce the spread of venom. Bitten areas should be kept in a neutral position at the level of the heart. If possible, attempt to identify the type of snake.

BEARS

In the event a bear is encountered, attempt to leave the area. Do not under any circumstances approach a bear or go between a bear and bear cubs. Do not attempt to feed bears. If a bear approaches, make noise and wave your arms to scare it off. If the bear charges it may be necessary to fight back to avoid serious injury. **All bear sightings should be reported immediately to the SOC 304.465.2900 and all personnel removed from the immediate area of the sighting.**



RABIES CARRYING ANIMALS

Raccoons and other commonly observed small animals are known to carry rabies. Never attempt to approach any animal and report any animal acting in a strange manner, especially if the animal is unnaturally aggressive, to the SOC.

DEER TICKS

Deer ticks are known to carry Lyme disease. They can be found in grassy as well as wooded areas. While ticks are often hard to detect in the woods, they can be located by carefully checking clothes, skin, and hair. A tick check should be performed several times a day and whenever leaving tick habit. Remove ticks from clothing but seek medical assistance in removing ticks embedded in the skin or hair.



SUMMIT WILDLIFE HAZARDS

COPPERHEADS

Copperheads are usually colorful and strikingly patterned snakes. They derive their name from the copper-like coloring of the head. The background color of the back and sides is tan to pinkish. There are darker, chestnut-colored bands across the back and sides. Each band is of varying width, often described as hourglass shaped. Newborn Copperheads are colored and patterned like adults, excepting the last inch or so of the tail which will be a bright, sulfur yellow color. Adults are usually in the range of 24 to 36 inches in length, although specimens of greater than 42 inches are not rare. Copperheads eat small rodents, birds, lizards, snakes, amphibians, and insects.

Copperheads are venomous, pit vipers. They account for more cases of venomous snake bite than any of our other species. Fortunately, their venom is the least toxic of the species. Bites from Copperheads are very seldom fatal; however, a bite may still produce serious consequences.

Copperheads can be found in most all habitats, although they often prefer to be near streams and other waterways. They may be found on hilltops or lowlands. It is not unusual for them to be found in forested or undeveloped areas within and near suburban developments. Copperheads prefer habitats with lots of vines, vegetation and/or debris. Their coloration and patterning are very effective for camouflage in dead leaves on the forest floor. Copperheads rely upon camouflage and cover for safety.

When danger is perceived, Copperheads will usually freeze in place and remain motionless for the threat to pass. This strategy works well in their natural habitat. Unless a person steps on them, grasps them, or otherwise comes very, very close to them, Copperheads will not usually bite. However, the bite will be readily used as a last defense. An agitated Copperhead will vibrate its tail rapidly. The relative abundance of Copperheads and their occurrences near human habitations is the reason bites from Copperheads are at the top of venomous snake bite statistics in the eastern US.



EASTERN TIMBER RATTLESNAKE

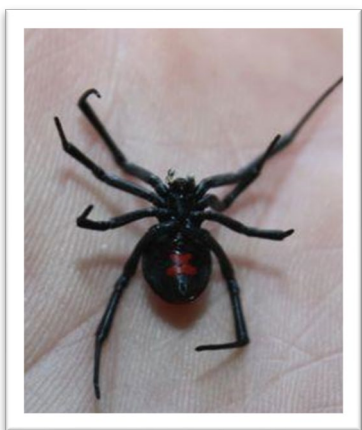
Timber rattlesnakes are secretive and passive animals. Timber rattlesnakes are thick-bodied snakes which may reach a length of five feet. Their diet consists primarily of small mammals but may also include birds and eggs.

Rattlesnakes buzz or rattle only to warn approaching humans and predators. They assume a defensive posture or coil their bodies with a raised head and tail when they feel threatened. Similarly, they strike when feeding or as a defense and will retreat if possible.

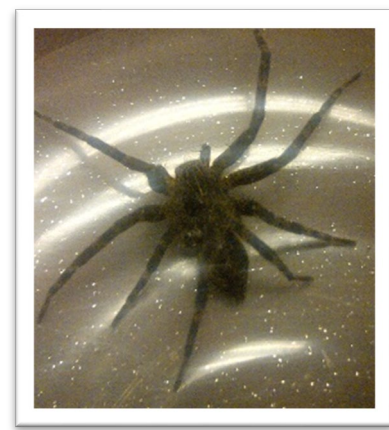
Timber rattlesnakes often remain unnoticed due to their cryptic colors and camouflage patterns. In such instances, their secretive nature and passive behavior allow humans and predators to pass without interference. Most reported bites result from disregarding defensive displays and unnecessarily provoking the rattlesnake. Unexpected encounters with timber rattlesnakes are best avoided by employing a watchful eye in forest settings and by stepping carefully when in timber rattlesnake habitat.



SPIDERS



Black Widow Spider



Brown Recluse Spider