

GRASS SNAKE

The Latin name for the Grass snake is *Natrix natrix*.

The Grass snake is the most common snake in Europe (though it is absent in Ireland and Scotland). This snake is quite harmless.

It grows as long as 120cm, or sometimes even to 2m, and has rough, ridged, or keeled scales for climbing. It is variable in colour, usually greenish-grey or greenish-brown above, with rows of dots or short stripes down the back. The throat is white or pale yellow, with a conspicuous yellowish collar behind the head.

Grass snakes differ from most snakes in that they lay eggs instead of giving birth to living young. The eggs are often laid on compost heaps, because they are warm and sheltered. When the snakes hatch they can often be seen in the garden.

An American Green snake and a striped variety of Garter snake are also sometimes called Grass snakes.