



brown snake

Storeria dekayi

Kingdom: Animalia
Division/Phylum: Chordata - vertebrates
Class: Reptilia
Order: Squamata
Family: Colubridae

FEATURES

The brown snake averages nine to 13 inches in length. It is usually brown but may be reddish or gray on the back with an area in the middle of the back lighter than the sides. The scales are keeled (ridged). A dark streak is present on each side of the head. Numerous dark lines cross the back giving it a ladder-back appearance. The belly is yellowish, brownish or pinkish.

BEHAVIORS

The brown snake lives in parks, cemeteries, urban empty lots, peatlands, floodplains, swamps, marshes, moist woods and hillsides. This snake is active during the day, except in the hottest summer months. It is rarely seen, however, as it spends much time under rocks, logs and other objects on the ground. The brown snake may flatten its body when disturbed and release a substance from its anal scent glands. Mating usually occurs in spring but may also occur in the fall. The female gives birth to from three to 25 young in late summer, the number depending on her size and age. This snake eats slugs, insects and earthworms.

HABITATS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bottomland forests | <input type="checkbox"/> rivers & streams |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lakes, ponds & reservoirs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> swamps |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lake Michigan | <input type="checkbox"/> temp water supplies |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> marshes | <input type="checkbox"/> wet prairies & fens |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> peatlands | |

ILLINOIS STATUS

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> common | <input type="checkbox"/> endangered | <input type="checkbox"/> threatened |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> native | <input type="checkbox"/> exotic | |

ILLINOIS RANGE

statewide

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 2006.
Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume I: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.