



## ringneck snake

*Diadophis punctatus*

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

### FEATURES

The ringneck snake averages 10 to 15 inches in length. It is a slender snake with a dark back and a yellow belly. A light ring is present around the neck. Scales are smooth.

### BEHAVIORS

The ringneck snake may be found in southeastern Illinois, the bluffs along the lower Illinois River and along the Mississippi River. This snake lives in woodlands or hilly prairie areas with rocks, logs or rotting trees. The ringneck snake is secretive, most often found under rocks, bark or logs. It is active at night. The ringneck snake overwinters in rock crevices or in the soil. It may secrete a foul smell when captured. Its tail curls into a corkscrew when threatened. Mating season occurs from March through April. About one to 10 eggs are deposited by the female in June or July among rocks or rotting logs. The eggs may be placed in a communal nest, where others of the same species also lay their eggs. Hatching occurs in August or September. The ringneck snake eats small salamanders and snakes, insects, earthworms, slugs and frogs.

### HABITATS

- bottomland forests
- coniferous forest
- southern Illinois lowlands
- upland deciduous forest

### ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

### ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: middle Mississippi River + Wabash River + southern 1/4  
Summer resident:  
Migrant:  
Winter resident:

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.  
Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume 2: Woodland Habitats CD-ROM.