



## eastern hognose snake

*Heterodon platirhinos*

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

### FEATURES

The eastern hognose snake averages 20 to 33 inches in length. Its snout is upturned with a ridge on the top. Body color varies. The snake may be yellow, brown, gray, olive, orange or red. The back usually has dark blotches but may be plain. A pair of large dark blotches is found behind the head. The underside of the tail is lighter than the belly. Scales are keeled (ridged).

### BEHAVIORS

The eastern hognose snake may be found statewide in Illinois. This terrestrial snake lives in areas with sandy or loose soil, such as floodplains, old fields, woods and hillsides. It is active in the day. It may overwinter in an abandoned small mammal burrow. This snake will flatten its head and neck, hiss and inflate its body with air when disturbed, hence its nickname of "puff adder." It may also vomit, flip over on its back, shudder a few times and play dead. The hognose snake will excrete large amounts of foul-smelling waste material if picked up. Mating season occurs in April and May. An average of 15 to 25 eggs may be deposited by the female under rocks or in loose soil in June or July. Hatching occurs in August or September. This snake eats toads and frogs.

### HABITATS

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

### ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

### ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: statewide

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

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