



queen snake

Regina septemvittata

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

FEATURES

The queen snake averages 15 to 24 inches in length. It has a brown back and a yellow stripe along each lower side of the body. The belly is yellow with four brown stripes. The scales are keeled (ridged).

BEHAVIORS

The queen snake may be found in the northeastern one-fourth of Illinois. This snake lives in creeks and rivers in forested regions. Although aquatic, it may take cover under rocks or brush along the water's edge. The queen snake may flatten its body when disturbed and/or release large amounts of nasty-smelling musk from glands at the base of the tail. Mating occurs in spring. The female gives birth to from five to 20 young in late summer, the number depending upon her size and age. The queen snake eats mainly crayfish, especially those which have just shed their exoskeleton.

HABITATS

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

ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: northeastern 1/4

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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