



smooth earth snake

Virginia valeriae

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

FEATURES

The smooth earth snake averages seven to 10 inches in length. It has a gray or red-brown back with no markings and a white or yellow belly. The scales are smooth or weakly keeled (ridged).

BEHAVIORS

The smooth earth snake may be found in the southern one-third of Illinois. It lives in moist, wooded hillsides and abandoned fields where it generally hides under rocks. The smooth earth snake stays underground for long periods of time, coming out after heavy rains. It is active mainly at night. Mating occurs in May or June. Two to 14 young are born to the female in August or September. This snake eats earthworms, slugs and soft-bodied insects.

HABITATS

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

ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: southern 1/3

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.

Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume 2: Woodland Habitats CD-ROM.