

Reptiles/Amphibians

DESERT TORTOISE

Gopherus agassizii
Tortoise Family

Covered Species



Bob Furtak

Description: Terrestrial turtle with a moderately domed, tan to dark-brown shell that can exceed 35 cm (14 in.) in length. Hind legs and feet are elephant-like, front legs are flattened and covered with thick overlapping scales. It is the only living tortoise native to Nevada. Tortoises are solitary, but may share a large natural cavity for protection. It spends most of its life in burrows that it constructs to prevent overheating or freezing, and reduce moisture loss from skin and lungs. Tortoises hibernate from about October to March or April. An average of 4 - 6 eggs are laid per clutch between early May and mid July. Hatching occurs in late summer or early fall. Only 1 to 2 percent of hatchlings may survive to reproductive age (18 - 20 years old). Tortoises may live more than 50 years.

Diet: Annual wild flowers and grasses that germinate when there is sufficient winter rain. Also eat new growth of cactus, cactus flowers, parts of some shrubs, and perennial grasses. Water derived from plants and from the occasional rain puddle can pass through the bladder wall into the bloodstream and thus be used as needed. Tortoises may expel this water if disturbed or lifted and thus lose their safeguard against dehydration and death.

Habitat: Mojave desert scrub with creosote and bursage, and in blackbrush. Found on alluvial fans, bajadas, washes, and rocky hills up to 1,400 m (4,500 ft).

Range: Mojave Desert of southeastern California, southern Nevada, southwestern Utah, and northwestern Arizona; also in the Sonoran Desert and its subdivisions south of the Grand Canyon, and in western Mexico.

Special Remarks: The Mojave Desert populations west and north of the Colorado River are federally listed as Threatened, and are a State of Nevada protected species. Tortoises may not be disturbed, injured, or taken from the wild without a special permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Tortoises can be obtained as pets from the proper authorities.

BANDED GECKO

Coleonyx variegatus
Gecko Family

Covered Species



Description: Geckos are recognized by their soft, pliable skin, fine scales, large eyes, and vertical pupils. A medium-sized (total length: 8 - 13 cm [3 - 5 in.]) lizard with protruding eyes, elliptical pupils, and movable eyelids. Dorsal coloration is cream or pinkish with brown cross bands; skin on the ventral surface is translucent, some internal organs may be visible, scales are uniformly granular and smooth. Toes are slender without toe pads as seen in other species of gecko. The tail is banded, sometimes swollen, and breaks easily. Primarily nocturnal. May vocalize by squeaking when caught. This is the only gecko native to Nevada. An introduced species, the Mediterranean gecko (*Hemidactylus turcicus*), is common around homes and yards in the Las Vegas Valley and can be recognized by the presence of white tubercles (warts) on the dorsum.

Diet: Feeds at night on arthropods, mainly insects and spiders.

Habitat: Mojave desert scrub, and mesquite/catclaw habitats. Less common in pinyon-juniper, sagebrush, blackbrush, and desert riparian habitats. Rocks, crevices, yucca stumps, litter, and rubbish piles provide shelter. Elevation: up to 1,500 m (5,000 ft.).

Range: Found throughout the southwestern deserts from southern Nevada southward to western Mexico. Two subspecies occur in Clark County: the Desert banded gecko (*Coleonyx variegatus variegatus*) illustrated above, which occurs in western and southern Clark County, while the Utah banded gecko (*Coleonyx variegatus utahensis*) occurs in northeastern Clark County. In the Desert banded gecko, the dark bands are equal to or narrower than the interspaces, while in the Utah banded gecko, the dark bands are wider than the interspaces.

BANDED GILA MONSTER

Heloderma suspectum cinctum

Beaded Lizard Family

Evaluation Species



Description: A large (total length: 45 - 60 cm [18 - 24 in.]), heavy-bodied lizard with black, orange, pink, and yellow spots with 5 chain-like cross bands occurring on the dorsum from the neck to tail base. Scales on the dorsum are large, round, and bead-like. The tail is short, sausage-shaped, and banded. The tongue is black and forked, and is flicked in and out to taste the air as do snakes. These lizards move on short legs with an awkward, lumbering gate. While chuckwallas are sometimes confused with Gila monsters, no other lizard in our area has black and orange/pink bead-like scales. Mating occurs during the summer and 3 - 5 eggs are laid in the fall and winter. The tail serves as a fat-storage organ. Can eat up to 30 to 50 percent of its body weight in a single meal.

Diet: Eggs of birds and tortoises; also small mammals and lizards.

Habitat: Mojave desert scrub, mesquite/catclaw, blackbrush, oak, juniper, and desert riparian habitats. Found on the lower slopes of rocky canyons, mesic flats, washes, and flats with grassland or succulents. Uses rocks and burrows of other animals for cover.

Range: Occurs in the Mojave, Colorado, and Sonoran deserts. This subspecies occurs in the northern portion of the species range and in western Arizona. While it may be widespread in Clark County, Nevada, few observation records exist to document distribution and abundance.

Comments: This is the only venomous lizard in Nevada. Although appearing slow and awkward, this species can bite quickly and inflict a painful bite. They secrete venom via grooved teeth into their saliva, and then use their powerful jaws to grind the saliva into the bite.

Special Remarks: The Gila monster is a State of Nevada protected species.

DESERT IGUANA

Dipsosaurus dorsalis
Iguana Family

Covered Species



D. Bradford Hardinbrook

Description: A large (total length: 30 - 40 cm [12 - 16 in.]), pale, round-bodied lizard with a long tail and a relatively small head. The overall body color is light: cream colored with a brownish net-like pattern and gray or whitish spots on the head and neck. In addition to the overall coloration, a line of slightly enlarged scales in the midline of the back runs the length of the body. This species can be recognized from other species of large lizards in southern Nevada by the light coloration (other species would be dark colored or would have dark markings) and the enlarged mid-dorsal scales. Tolerant of hot weather, these lizards can remain active above ground well after other species have sought cooler temperatures underground.

Diet: Primarily eats creosote bush flowers, sand verbena flowers, other shrub flowers, and fruit. Also eats carrion and insects.

Habitat: Mojave desert scrub, mesquite, and salt desert scrub habitats; in rocky stream beds, bajadas, sandy hummocks, and gravelly hills below 1,525 m (5,000 ft) elevation.

Range: Southwestern deserts from southern Nevada southward into western Mexico. In Clark County, Nevada, the range of this species is similar to that of its principal food and habitat.

Comment: Desert iguanas, western chuckwallas, and desert tortoises are the only herbivorous reptiles native to Nevada.

DESERT NIGHT LIZARD

Xantusia vigilis
Night Lizard Family

Evaluation Species



Phil Medica

Description: A small (total length: 10 - 13 cm [4 - 5 in.]), slim lizard with vertical pupils but no eyelids. The body color is light olive, yellow, brown, or orange, usually with small dark spots on the back that tend to form lines. The skin is soft. The head scales are large and symmetrical, the dorsal scales are small and granular, and the ventral scales large, square, and smooth. In southern Nevada, this species can be recognized by the small size, lidless eyes, and vertical pupils. Offspring are born alive during September and October. These lizards are often thought to be nocturnal; but they are diurnally active under cover and primarily active during crepuscular hours although they may be nocturnal during the heat of summer.

Diet: Feeds on termites, ants, beetles, scorpions, centipedes, and flies.

Habitat: Mojave desert scrub, mesquite/catclaw and blackbrush habitats; also pinyon-juniper and sagebrush habitats. Associated with Joshua tree, yucca, pinyon pine, and juniper. Secretive and dependent upon cover, this species primarily lives beneath and among fallen leaves and branches of yucca, agave, Joshua trees, and other debris.

Range: This species is widely distributed throughout the Mojave and Colorado deserts in southern California, southern Nevada, southwestern Utah, and southward into Baja California and northwestern Mexico. It is widely distributed throughout Clark County, Nevada, in the appropriate habitat.

GREAT BASIN COLLARED LIZARD

Crotaphytus insularis bicinctores
Collared and Leopard Lizard Family

Covered Species



Description: A moderately large (total length: 23 - 28 cm [9 - 11 in.]) lizard with a stocky body and a relatively large head. The body color is dark with contrasting light spots and bars, while the color of the tail and limbs is light with contrasting dark spots. This species can be recognized from other species of large lizards by the presence of a white or yellow neckband, bordered by black, that forms a distinct collar. The background color varies, and it can be green during the breeding season in the spring. Some other species of lizards in southern Nevada (e.g., the desert spiny lizard, *Sceloporus magister*) have dark marks on the neck, but none of these other species have the complete neck band seen in the collared lizard.

Diet: These lizards are voracious predators that can run on their hind legs to capture prey or escape other predators. They feed on insects, lizards, small rodents, berries, and leaves.

Habitat: Found in Mojave desert scrub, salt desert scrub, mesquite/catclaw, desert riparian, blackbrush, sagebrush, and pinyon-juniper habitats in rocky terrain, arroyos, hill slopes, and washes with sparse vegetative cover up to an elevation of 2,300 m (7,500 ft).

Range: The species occurs throughout the Mojave, Great Basin, and other southwestern deserts southward to California, Baja California, and northwestern Mexico.

Comments: The taxonomy of this species is in flux, and some texts refer to this species as *Crotaphytus bicinctores*, the Mojave black collared lizard.

LARGE-SPOTTED LEOPARD LIZARD

Gambelia wislizenii wislizenii

Collared and Leopard Lizard Family

Covered Species



Description: A moderately large (total length: 30 - 40 cm [12 - 15 in.]) lizard with a large head, and long tapered tail. The dorsal coloration is cream or tan with large, dark, gray-brown blotches (leopard spots), and the chin has rows of gray stripes. Females are generally larger than males. During the breeding season, females develop orange-red spots and bars on the body and tail. These lizards are fast and can run on their hind legs to capture prey or escape predators.

Diet: Omnivorous. Feeds on lizards, rodents, crickets, grasshoppers, other insects, and plants (e.g., *Lycium* berries, small leaves, and flowers).

Habitat: Primarily Mojave desert scrub and salt desert scrub; also found in blackbrush, sagebrush, and pinyon-juniper habitats. Found on hardpan, gravelly, or sandy open ground below 1,800 m (6,000 ft) elevation where vegetation is sparse or in small clumps.

Range: As a species, the long-nosed leopard lizard (*G. wislizenii*) is widely distributed throughout the southwestern U.S. from Oregon to Texas and south into Mexico. Our subspecies occurs throughout most of this geographic range except for the Central Valley of California where the endangered blunt-nosed leopard lizard (*G. silus*) occurs, and where the small-spotted leopard lizard (*G. w. punctatus*) occurs in southeastern Utah, north-northeastern Arizona, and the northwestern corner of New Mexico.

SOUTHERN DESERT HORNED LIZARD

Phrynosoma platyrhinos calidiarum
Horned Lizard Family

Evaluation Species



Description: A small (total length: 5 - 10 cm [2 - 4 in.]) flattened lizard with spikes on the back of the head, sharp-pointed scales on the dorsum, and a fringe of pointed scales on the sides of the body. The dorsal coloration generally is a pattern and color that resembles the background, and can range from cream to tan with black, orange, and yellow chevron-like markings. The ventral coloration is cream. This is the only species of horned lizard in Clark County, Nevada.

Diet: Primarily eats ants, especially harvester ants; will also eat insects, spiders, and fruits.

Habitat: Most low-desert habitats, especially Mojave desert scrub. Typically found among woody shrubs, cacti, and yucca on sandy flats, alluvial fans, washes, and dunes below an elevation of 2,000 m (6,500 ft). Also found in mesquite/catclaw, salt desert scrub, blackbrush, sagebrush, and pinyon-juniper habitats.

Range: The species occurs from eastern Oregon and southern Idaho southward throughout the deserts into northwestern Mexico. This subspecies occurs from southern Nevada southward.

Comments: Often called "horny toads," these lizards are favored as pets. However, they often do not survive in captivity because of difficulties in adequately providing their specialized diet of ants.

SOUTHERN PLATEAU LIZARD

Sceloporus undulatus tristichus

Horned Lizard Family

Evaluation Species



Description: Small (total length: 8 - 15 cm [3 - 6 in.]) gray or brown lizards with rough scales, light longitudinal stripes, and a blue belly. This is one of several species of blue-belly lizards in southern Nevada. Males have a longitudinal patch of blue on each side of the belly and a small blue patch on each side of the throat. Females may be marked like males or they may lack the blue. Other species of lizards in southern Nevada (e.g., the Desert spiny lizard, *Sceloporus magister*) also have blue bellies and blue throat patches, but in this species, the blue on the throat forms two small, distinct patches rather than one large patch.

Diet: Feeds on insects and arthropods.

Habitat: Occurs in a variety of habitats, including pinyon-juniper woodlands and rocky hillsides to an elevation of 3,000 m (10,000 ft). Often seen along fences or on fence posts.

Range: The species occurs throughout the eastern and central U.S. from Pennsylvania and South Dakota southward into Mexico. This subspecies occurs south of the Colorado River in Arizona and New Mexico. In Clark County, Nevada, it occurs in the Virgin Mountains.

Comments: Also called the eastern fence lizard or simply the blue-bellies.

WESTERN CHUCKWALLA

Sauromalus obesus obesus
Iguana Family

Evaluation Species



D. Bradford Harderbrook

Description: A large (total length: 40 - 55 cm [16 - 22 in.]), heavy-bodied lizard with loose folds of skin around the head and neck. In males, the body color generally is blackish with rust or reddish while the tail is unmarked and light-colored. Females and young adults are blackish with light cross bands on the body and tail. Hatchlings and juveniles often have a brightly colored tail of alternating black and orange cross bands. Chuckwallas often are misidentified as Gila monsters. These two species can be separated by the presence of large black and orange scales on the Gila monster. To escape predators, chuckwallas will enter a rock crevice, gulp air, inflate its body, and wedge itself into the crack. They also use their stout tail to slap an approaching predator.

Diet: Primarily eats green leaves, flowers, fruit, and selected shrubs. Young may eat insects and insect larvae.

Habitat: Mojave desert scrub, blackbrush, salt desert scrub, and mesquite/catclaw habitats. Typically found on rocky flats, rocky slopes, and boulder outcrops. Requires shady, well-drained soil for nests.

Range: The species occurs throughout the southwestern deserts: southern Nevada, southern Utah, and northwestern Mexico. This subspecies occurs in southeastern California, southern Nevada, southeastern Utah, and western Arizona. In Clark County, Nevada, this species occurs on virtually all undisturbed rocky hillsides up to about 1,500 m (4,920 ft) in elevation.

Comments: Chuckwallas were historically used as food by local native peoples.

Special Remarks: Previously a candidate for protection under the Endangered Species Act. Was proposed as Covered Species but then changed to Evaluation Species in the Clark County permit.

WESTERN RED-TAILED SKINK

Eumeces gilberti rubricaudatus
Skink Family

Covered Species



Phil Medica

Description: Skinks are recognized by a cylindrical body shape with smooth, shiny, round scales, and relatively short legs. Scales on the body are fairly uniform in size, but those on the head are large and variable in size and shape. This species is medium-sized (total length: 15 - 23 cm [6 - 9 in.]). Adult coloration is brownish overall with varied amounts of dark spotting, but virtually no stripes. Young skinks are dark with light longitudinal stripes and a tail that is pink or blue. As the animal matures, the tail becomes reddish, as does the underside of the jaw and neck. Another skink, the Western skink (*Eumeces skiltonianus*), also occurs in southern Nevada. The Western skink is smaller and resembles an immature Western red-tailed skink, except that the Western skink has dark lateral stripes that extend far onto the tail while those of the Western red-tailed skink end at the base of the tail. The tail color in the Western skink is always blue.

Diet: Primarily insects and spiders, including beetles and grasshoppers. When close to springs, probably eats aquatic invertebrates.

Habitat: Primarily pinyon-juniper and riparian habitats. Less common in mixed conifer, sagebrush, blackbrush and mesquite/catclaw habitats. Found in rocky areas or in areas with logs or leaf cover near permanent or intermittent streams.

Range: The species (Gilbert skink) occurs in isolated populations in southern Nevada, southern and central California, central Arizona, and northern Baja California. This subspecies, Western red-tailed skink, occurs in two isolated populations: the first is located in mountain ranges in southwestern Nevada and southeastern California, and the second occurs in central and southern California. In Clark County, Nevada, known from the Spring, Sheep, and Newberry mountains.

CALIFORNIA [COMMON] KINGSNAKE

Lampropeltis getulus californiae
Colubrid Family

Covered Species



Description: A moderately large (total length: 60 - 150 cm [2 - 5 ft]) snake with a striking pattern of black and white bands that may be brown and yellowish and encircle the body. The scales are smooth and shiny. This is the only black-and-white banded snake in southern Nevada; other species of banded snakes also have red bands or the bands do not encircle the entire body. This species is usually active in the morning and evening, but will assume a nocturnal habit during the heat of summer.

Diet: Feeds on other snakes including rattlesnakes, lizards, small mammals, birds, bird eggs, and frogs. Prey killed by constriction.

Habitat: Wide ranging, most commonly found in Mojave desert scrub and salt desert scrub habitats in the vicinity of rock outcrops or clumps of vegetation up to 2,100 m (7,000 ft) in elevation.

Range: The species occurs throughout the southern and western U.S. This subspecies occurs in southern Nevada, southwestern Utah, northwestern Arizona, most of California, northern Baja California, and northwestern Mexico.

GLOSSY SNAKE

Arizona elegans
Colubrid Family

Covered Species



Description: A medium-sized (total length: 50 - 90 cm [20 - 36 in.]), light cream- to tan-colored snake with small blotches (tan or gray with dark edges) down the center of the dorsum. The head is narrow. The ventral surface is plain white or buff and unmarked. The scales are smooth and shiny, but the colors generally have the appearance of being faded. This species resembles a slender, faded gopher snake (*Pituophis melanoleucus*), but the scales of the gopher snake are keeled (i.e., not smooth). Glossy snakes are primarily nocturnal.

Diet: Feeds on small mammals, lizards, and possibly birds, all of which are killed by constriction prior to eating.

Habitat: Mojave desert scrub and salt desert scrub habitats with open sandy surfaces, scattered brush, and rocky areas, extending into Joshua tree and grassland habitats up to about 1,500 m (5,000 ft) in elevation.

Range: Southwestern U.S. from California to Texas, and from Nebraska to Mexico. The subspecies present in Clark County, Nevada, is the Desert glossy snake (*Arizona elegans eburnata*). It occurs in southern Nevada and southeastern California.

Comments: Also known as the "Faded Snake" due to its faded appearance.

MOJAVE GREEN RATTLESNAKE

Crotalus scutulatus scutulatus
Pit Viper Family

Covered Species



Description: A medium-sized (total length: 120 cm [4 ft]) rattlesnake with a wide, triangular-shaped head. The body's base color is greenish or olive-green with well-defined, darker diamonds offset by yellowish edges sequentially arranged down the center of the dorsum. The tail is banded with alternating black and white rings, the white rings nearly twice the width of the black rings. A dark stripe, also edged in light yellow, runs backward and down diagonally from the rear of the eye to the rear of the jaw-line. Other species of rattlesnake lack the overall greenish cast or have less distinct markings, but definite identification, particularly in juveniles, may require inspection of the shape, arrangement and number of head scales (not recommended except by an expert).

Diet: Feeds on rodents, snakes, lizards, birds, and eggs.

Habitat: Mojave desert scrub and blackbrush habitats and up to lower mountain slopes; mostly on flats, broad valleys, and rolling hills.

Range: The species occurs from southeastern California to southwestern Texas, south through Mexico. This subspecies is the one that occurs in the U.S., and it probably is widespread in Clark County, Nevada, in the appropriate habitat.

Comments: Also called the Mohave rattlesnake or green rattlesnake. Venomous; the venom is highly toxic and could become a serious health risk.

REGAL RINGNECK SNAKE

Diadophis punctatus regalis
Colubrid Family

Evaluation Species



Description: A small (total length: 20 - 60 cm [8 - 24 in.]), slender snake with a dorsal color that generally is slate-gray or gray-blue. The ventral surface is entirely red or red-orange with black spots, and the ventral surface of the tail is bright red-orange. The head is darker than the body, and usually it is set off from the body by a conspicuous yellow or orange neck ring. However, in the Regal subspecies the ring is often faint or absent. Similar appearing black-headed snakes may have light-colored neck rings, but these rings are not red, and the ventral surface of these other species is not entirely red with black spots. When alarmed, these snakes will coil and shake their tail while displaying the red ventral surface.

Diet: Feeds on earthworms, slugs, frogs, and lizards. Mildly venomous to its small prey.

Habitat: Usually found in moist areas. In the arid West, this species occurs in mountains near permanent water or in riparian areas from 730 m (2,400 ft) elevation up to the aspen-fir belt (about 2,700 m [9,000 ft]).

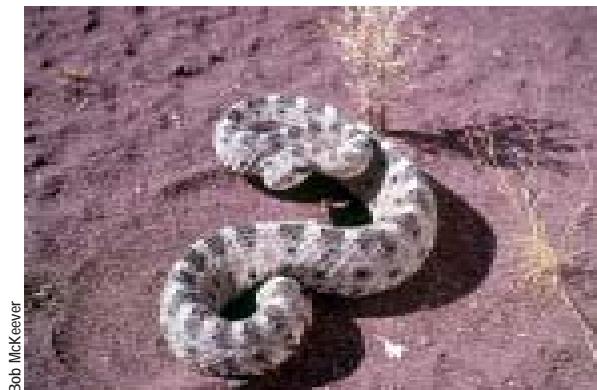
Range: Widely distributed throughout much of the U.S. except the upper Midwest. This subspecies occurs in eastern Nevada and western Arizona in isolated mountain ranges.

Comments: While mildly venomous to its small prey, this species is harmless to humans.

SIDEWINDER

Crotalus cerastes
Pit Viper Family

Covered Species



Description: A small (total length: 45 - 75 cm [18 - 30 in.]) rattlesnake with a wide, triangular-shaped head. This is the only rattlesnake with horn-like projections over its eyes; these are really enlarged, erect scales. The body color harmonizes with that of the background substrate, but is usually light cream or tan with darker tan to brown blotches on the dorsum. A blackish stripe angling back and downward from the eye to the rear of the jaw is noticeable. Sidewinders move in signature sideways motion, often leaving J-shaped or S-shaped lines in soft sand. Although difficult to see, this species sometimes can be found coiled and partially buried in the sand.

Diet: Feeds on small mammals and lizards which are subdued with its venomous bite.

Habitat: Mojave desert scrub, mesquite/catclaw, and salt desert scrub habitats in stream beds, bajadas, hardpan, and barren dune areas below 1,675 m (5,500 ft) in elevation.

Range: This species occurs in southeastern California, southern Nevada, southwestern Utah, western Arizona, and southward into northwestern Mexico. The subspecies in Nevada is the Mojave Desert sidewinder (*Crotalus cerastes cerastes*); other subspecies occur in the Colorado and Sonoran deserts.

Comments: Venomous; an unavoidable encounter may become a serious health risk.

SONORAN LYRE SNAKE

Trimorphodon biscutatus lambda
Colubrid Family

Covered Species



Description: A medium-sized (total length: 45 - 70 cm [18 - 28 in.]) snake with a wide head, narrow neck, and cat-like (vertical) pupils. The body color is gray or tan, and there are brown, saddle-shaped markings on the dorsum. A V-shaped patch is present on the head that resembles a lyre. Other similarly marked species lack the lyre mark and have round pupils. This species is secretive. It is a good climber and can climb rocks and trees. It is venomous, and has fangs that are located in the upper jaw at the back of the mouth (a rear-fanged species). The venom is capable of immobilizing its small prey.

Diet: Feeds on lizards, small mammals, birds, bats, and other species that inhabit rocky habitats and cliffs.

Habitat: Rocky canyons and hillsides in Mojave desert scrub, pinyon-juniper, and mixed conifer habitat in lowlands, mesas, and lower mountain slopes up to 2,250 m (7,400 ft) in elevation.

Range: The species occurs across the southwestern desert from California to Texas, and southward into northern Mexico. This subspecies occurs in southeastern California, southern Nevada, southwestern Utah, western and southern Arizona, and northern Mexico. Although infrequently observed in Clark County, Nevada, lyre snakes are probably widespread in the appropriate habitat.

Comments: Venomous. Venom effect on humans is not well documented.

SONORAN MOUNTAIN KINGSNAKE

Lampropeltis pyromelana
Colubrid Family

Evaluation Species



Description: A medium-sized (total length: 60 - 120 cm [2 - 4 ft]) snake with distinctive red, black, and white bands that encircle the body. The black bands separate the red and white bands, and the white bands are uniformly narrow. The red bands may be complete across the back or may be confined to the sides forming wedges of red within the black bands. The snout generally is white or cream colored. This species can be confused with the venomous Western coral snake (*Micruroides euryxanthus*), but Western coral snakes do not naturally occur in Nevada. Other black, red, and white-banded snakes can be distinguished from the Sonoran Mountain Kingsnake by having wider white bands on the sides and belly than on the back.

Diet: Feeds on lizards, snakes, and small mammals.

Habitat: Mountains, ranging from pinyon-juniper woodland up to pine-fir habitats. Found in shrublands and conifer forests, often near streams or springs and in or around rotting logs or rocks.

Range: The species occurs from eastern Nevada, central and southwestern Utah, southward through central and southeastern Arizona, and into north-central Mexico. In Nevada, these kingsnakes are found in isolated mountain ranges such as the Shell Creek, Egan, and Snake ranges in White Pine County. May be present in mountain ranges in Clark County; a single locality is documented from the Virgin Mountains.

SPECKLED RATTLESNAKE

Crotalus mitchellii pyrrhus
Pit Viper Family

Covered Species



Description: A medium-sized (total length: 120 cm [4 ft]), heavy-bodied rattlesnake with a wide, triangular-shaped head. Dorsal color harmonizes with the local habitat, varying from nearly patternless light colors to broad bands of rust with gray. Scales are keeled and often flecked with black and white, giving a rough or blurred, speckled effect. The sides of the head are usually gray and contrast with the brown top of the head. The tail is banded with rust and tan or cream rings near the rattle's base. While other species of rattlesnakes in southern Nevada tend to have more distinct markings on the dorsal pattern, less speckling, and diagonal eye-stripes, definite identification may require close inspection by an expert of the number, arrangement, and size of head scales. Venomous snake.

Diet: Primarily rodents, but large individuals may take small rabbits, whereas young individuals may feed on lizards until large enough to take rodents. Prey is subdued with a venomous bite.

Habitat: Pinyon-juniper, sagebrush, Mojave desert scrub, and blackbrush habitats; in rocky terrain on outcrops and boulders, also on loose soil and sand.

Range: The species occurs in southeastern California, southern Nevada, southwestern Arizona, and northwestern New Mexico from sea level to 2,450 m (8,000 ft) in elevation. Two subspecies occur in Clark County, Nevada. The Southwestern Speckled Rattlesnake (*C. m. pyrrhus*), illustrated above, is a lighter form; it occurs in the central and eastern portions; Panamint Rattlesnake (*C. m. stephensi*), a darker form, occurs in the western portion.

Comments: Venomous; an encounter may become a serious health risk.

WESTERN DIAMONDBACK

Crotalus atrox
Pit Viper Family

Evaluation Species



Description: A large (total length: 75-150 cm [3-5 ft], maximum to 225 cm [7.5 ft]), heavy-bodied rattlesnake with a wide, triangular-shaped head. The dorsal color generally is grayish (color may harmonize with habitat) with darker diamond-shaped marks set off by white borders. The scales are flecked with black, giving it a speckled appearance. The overall color is dull, with a faded appearance. The tail is banded with black and white rings; the black rings are as wide or wider than the white rings. There are two distinct, light-colored diagonal stripes on the side of the head, with the rear line extending from behind the eye to the corner of the mouth. This species may be identified from other species of rattlesnakes in southern Nevada by the presence of black and white rings on the tail that are approximately equal in width, and by the eye-line that ends at the corner of the mouth. Generally crepuscular and nocturnal, but sometimes diurnal.

Diet: Feeds on rodents and small rabbits; smaller individuals may eat lizards.

Habitat: This species occurs in a variety of habitats, especially in open Mojave desert scrub habitat and rocky foothills up to 2,100 m (7,000 ft) in elevation; also woodlands and sandy mesquite dune habitats.

Range: This species occurs throughout the southwestern U.S. (California to Oklahoma) and northern Mexico. In Nevada, it is restricted to the southern tip of the state and along the Colorado River.

Comments: This species is the largest of the western rattlesnakes. Also called the Coon-tail rattlesnake. It is a venomous snake.

WESTERN LEAF-NOSED SNAKE

Phyllorhynchus decurtatus
Colubrid Family

Covered Species



Description: A small snake (total length: 38 - 50 cm [15 - 20 in.]). The dorsal color is gray to tan with scattered dark blotches, and the ventral surface is white and unmarked. A greatly enlarged scale (the leaf) is present on the tip of the snout. In southern Nevada, another snake with an enlarged scale on the tip of its snout is called the Western patch-nosed snake (*Salvadora hexalepis*), and the dorsum is striped, not blotched. Also, the habit of the Western leaf-nosed snake is nocturnal, whereas the Western patch-nosed snake is diurnal.

Diet: Feeds on geckos, and probably other lizards, that it encounters in rodent burrows.

Habitat: Mojave desert scrub and salt desert scrub habitats in sandy flats.

Range: This species occurs in the Mojave and Sonoran deserts, southward into Mexico. The subspecies in Nevada (the Western leaf-nosed snake, *Phyllorhynchus decurtatus perkinsi*) occurs in southeastern California, southern Nevada, southwestern Arizona, and northwestern Mexico. In Clark County, Nevada, this species probably is widely distributed in the appropriate habitat.

WESTERN LONG-NOSED SNAKE

Rhinocheilus lecontei lecontei
Colubrid Family

Covered Species



Description: A medium-sized (total length: 60 - 90 cm [24 - 36 in.]) snake with alternating red, black, and yellow bands on the dorsum. The ventral surface is pale with dark spots. The dark dorsal bands are flecked with cream, and the red and cream bands are flecked with black. Sometimes the red flecking is very faint. The snout is pointed, and the head is long and only slightly wider than the neck. In southern Nevada, other species of red, black, and light banded snakes do not have the black and white flecking as seen in this species. Western long-nosed snakes are primarily crepuscular in habit, but will assume nocturnal activity in hot weather.

Diet: Feeds on lizards and small mammals, all of which are killed by constriction.

Habitat: Mojave desert scrub and salt desert scrub habitats with open sandy surfaces and scattered brush; also found in rocky areas below 1,525 m (5,000 ft) in elevation.

Range: The species occurs from Nebraska to Idaho to California, and southward into central Mexico. This subspecies occurs in the Great Basin, central California, and southern Arizona, and is widely distributed in Clark County, Nevada, in the appropriate habitat.

RELICT LEOPARD FROG

Rana onca

True Frog Family

Covered Species



Description: A small-sized (4 - 9 cm [1.6 - 3.5 in.]), brown, grey, or green frog with a few light-edged dark spots on the dorsum. A light-colored ridge on each side of the body extends from the head to the groin, and a light-colored stripe exists on the upper jaw. The eardrum has a light spot. In this species, the spots and their light-colored edges are faint, irregular, and indistinct relative to other leopard frogs. The Relict leopard frogs breed during March through June. Egg masses are attached to submerged vegetation or laid on the bottom. Primarily nocturnal.

Diet: Aquatic and flying insects.

Habitat: Desert riparian habitats along permanent streams, springs, and water impoundments up to 760 m (2,500 ft) elevation.

Range: Endemic to eastern Clark County, Nevada, and the Virgin River. Found in isolated populations near the Virgin and Colorado rivers in Nevada and Arizona.

Special Remarks: Species of Concern.

SOUTHWESTERN TOAD

Bufo microscaphus

True Toad Family

Evaluation Species



Description: A small to medium-sized toad (head and body: 5 - 7 cm [2 - 3 in.]). The dorsal color is olive to reddish-brown, and harmonizes with the habitat. Lighter colored patches may be present on the head (including the eyelids and portions of the oval parotoid glands), and on the top (sacral humps) of the back. Ventral color is uniformly light with usually no spots in adults and no dusky color on the throat of males. Bony ridges (cranial crests) on the head are absent or small. The skin is rough, but warts are small and are usually not distinctively colored. Other species of toads in southern Nevada have prominent cranial crests (*B. woodhousii*) or round parotoid glands (*B. punctatus*). Breeding occurs in streams from March to July. Eggs are laid in 1 - 3 rowed strings of up to 4,000 eggs and deposited on the bottom of shallow, quiet waters among gravel, leaves, sticks, mud, or clean sand. Larvae are dark with variable amounts of gold. Adults are primarily nocturnal, except during breeding season.

Diet: Larvae eat algae, organic debris, and plant tissue. Adults consume a variety of insects and snails, and may cannibalize newly metamorphosed juveniles.

Habitat: Inhabits arroyos, streams, washes and adjacent upland pinyon-juniper habitat. Also found along irrigation ditches, reservoirs, and in flooded fields near streams. It burrows into loose sandy soil. Elevations: up to 1,830 m (6,000 feet), and up to 150 m (500 ft) from water. Most common in tributaries of flowing streams.

Range: This species has been found in scattered locations in southeastern Nevada, southwestern Utah, northwestern and central Arizona, western New Mexico, and western Mexico. In Clark County, Nevada, it may be found in Meadow Valley Wash, and along the Virgin River and the Colorado River to Hoover Dam.

Comments: The Southwestern toad (*B. microscaphus*) is now considered to be separate from its geographically disjunct sister species, the Federally Endangered Arroyo toad (*B. californicus*). It is likely to hybridize with woodhouse toads.

RED SPOTTED TOAD

Bufo punctatus

True Toad Family

Evaluation Species



Ross Haley

Description: A small (head and body: 4 - 8 cm [1.5 to 3 in.]) flat toad. The dorsal surface is grayish-brown with reddish warts, and the ventral surface whitish to buff with or without spotting. The parotoid glands are round, and the parietal ridges are small or absent. Other species of toads in southern Nevada have prominent cranial crests or oval parotoid glands. Breeds from April to September after rain. This is the only North American toad that lays eggs one at a time on the bottom of pools. Active at twilight and well into the night.

Diet: Insects.

Habitat: Deserts, rocky areas, and agricultural areas, usually near natural or manmade sources of permanent water.

Range: Southwestern U.S. from California to Texas, and from Utah and Kansas south into central Mexico. This species occurs throughout Clark County, Nevada, in the appropriate habitat.

WATCH LIST SPECIES

Common zebra-tailed lizard

Callisaurus draconoides

draconoides

Pacific tree frog

Hyla regilla

Plains toad

Bufo cognatus

Woodhouse toad

Bufo woodhousii