

CONSERVATION RESEARCH REPORTS

Timber Rattlesnake Population Extirpated

Timber Rattlesnakes (*Crotalus horridus*) are long-lived and slowly maturing snakes. Populations throughout the distribution of the species in the eastern United States have been negatively impacted by habitat alteration, poaching, and vehicular traffic. Over a three-year period, FOSTER ET AL. (2006. *Bulletin of the Chicago Herpetological Society* 41:147–148) surveyed habitats and potential hibernacula at a site in Clark County, Illinois where numerous recent, credible reports of Timber Rattlesnakes had occurred. Finding no rattlesnakes, the authors concluded that the population had been extirpated. Because snakes encountered in the area in the past had been killed despite laws protecting this species in the state, education must be an integral part of conservation strategies in Illinois and throughout the species' range.

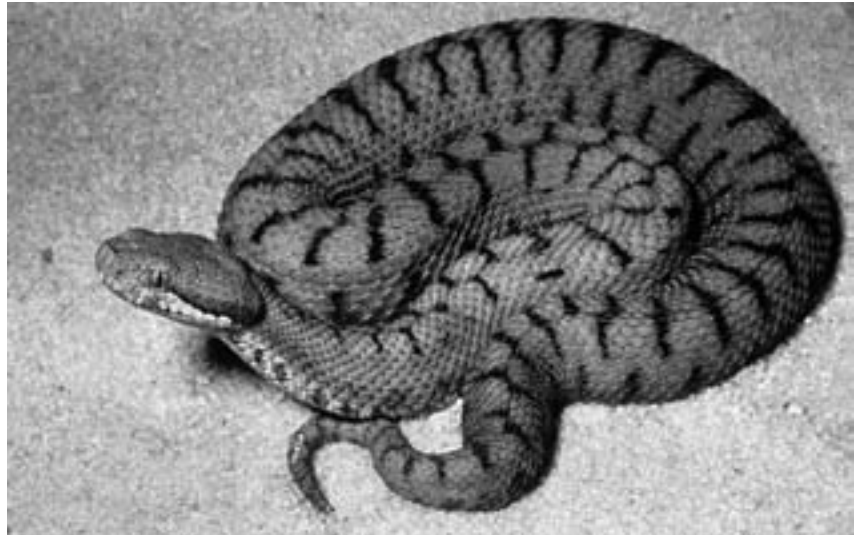


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Populations of Timber Rattlesnakes (*Crotalus horridus*) throughout the eastern United States have been negatively impacted by habitat alteration, poaching, and vehicular traffic.

Changes in an Italian Snake Fauna

Eight species of snakes have been recorded from a protected area in central Italy. FILIPPI AND LUISELLI (2006. *The Herpetological Journal* 16:29–36) compared recent survey data with those collected 10 years previously. Although more species (8 vs. 6) were found during the recent survey and a slight rise in the species diversity index was recorded, the species dominance index increased dramatically. This was largely due to a relative increase in the most abundant species (*Coluber viridiflavus*) and a



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The European Asp (*Vipera aspis*) was one of two species negatively affected by clearing of brush at an archaeological site in central Italy.

decline in the relative abundance of other species. Two species (*Elaphe longissima* and *Vipera aspis*) apparently were affected negatively by clearing of brush at an archaeological site. Documenting such declines is particularly relevant in Europe, where many protected areas are set aside for archaeological or historical rather than biological reasons.

Unsuccessful Reintroduction

Eighteen years after 29 Mugger Crocodiles (*Crocodylus palustris*) were reintroduced into the Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala, India. JAYSON ET AL. (2006. *The Herpetological Journal* 16:69–76) indicated that the effort was a failure. Although fishes provided ample prey for smaller crocodiles, large mammalian prey was insufficient for larger animals. Crocodile attacks on livestock were reported within two years of rein-



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Efforts to reestablish a population of Mugger Crocodiles (*Crocodylus palustris*) into the Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala, India, failed.

roduction, and 35 attacks on humans (two of which were fatal) have occurred. Nine crocodiles were removed to reduce conflicts, but the local population does not support the conservation of crocodiles under existing conditions.



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Lesser Earless Lizards (*Holbrookia maculata*), such as this individual from Sumner County, have all but disappeared in Kansas.

Earless Lizards Disappearing in Kansas

Although once abundantly (albeit spottily) distributed throughout the western two-thirds of Kansas, Taggart (2006. *Kansas Journal of Herpetology* 19:10) noted that the Lesser Earless Lizard (*Holbrookia maculata*) has all but disappeared in Kansas within the past 10 years. Causes are unknown.