

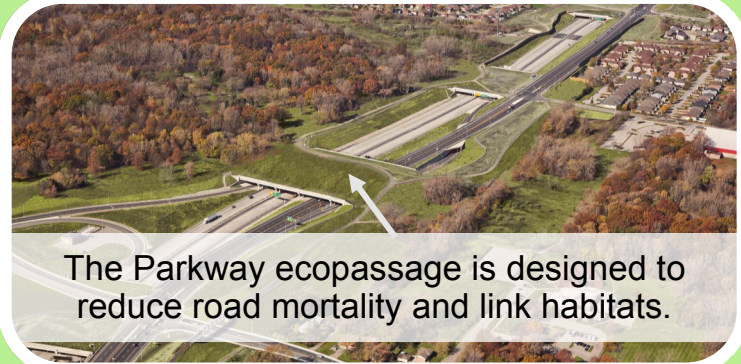
A CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO PROTECTING ENDANGERED SNAKES

This fact sheet summarizes the best landscaping and mowing practices to protect Butler's Gartersnake and Eastern Foxsnake from harm as well as other more common reptile species.

Why are Butler's Gartersnake and Eastern Foxsnake Populations at Risk?

The loss, fragmentation, and degradation of important habitat, including tallgrass prairies and wetlands, have contributed to the decline in populations of the endangered Butler's Gartersnake and Eastern Foxsnake. Road mortality and property management activities, such as lawn mowing, are other factors contributing to this decline.

Tallgrass prairies provide habitat for snakes.



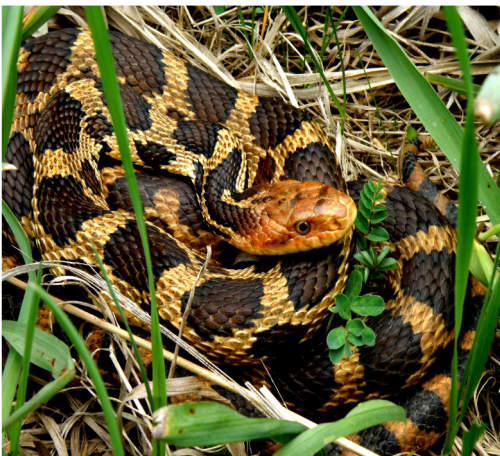
The Parkway ecopassage is designed to reduce road mortality and link habitats.

Meet the Butler's Gartersnake

These snakes are small (25-50cm in length). **Two distinctive features include their relatively small head with three whitish-yellow or orange stripes along the dark brown-black body.** They are found in moist habitats such as wetlands and tallgrass prairie, but also like the thick thatch of a healthy residential lawn. The lower Great Lakes region of the United States and a few locations in Southern Ontario are the only places in the world where the Butler's Gartersnake is found. The diet of Butler's Gartersnakes primarily consists of earthworms.



Butler's Gartersnake



Eastern Foxsnake

Meet the Eastern Foxsnake

These gentle snakes are the second largest snake species in Ontario, reaching lengths of almost two metres. **Their most distinctive features are large brown or black blotches running along the body and a reddish-orange head.** They feed primarily on small rodents such as mice and voles. They share the same habitat as the Butler's Gartersnake but have also adapted to human environments and sometimes take refuge in rock or wood piles. When frightened, an Eastern Foxsnake may mimic a rattlesnake by vibrating its tail which produces a buzzing sound. **Don't be scared!** This snake species is non-venomous.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT THE SNAKES!

Mow Mindfully

Snakes can be injured or killed by lawn mower blades.

- Look around your lawn before you mow!
- Mow less frequently.
- Raise the height of the mower to at least 15 cm.
- Mow in the early morning or late evening when temperatures are cooler and snakes are hiding.

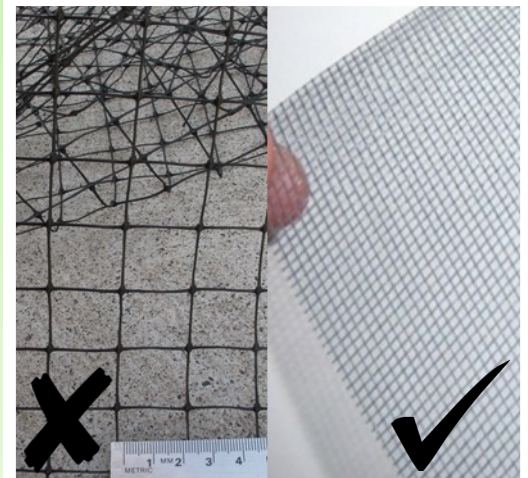


Live Near A Natural Area?

- If your property borders a natural area such as the Ojibway Prairie Complex, extra care should be taken to avoid harming snakes.
- Consider keeping a strip of longer grass with a width of at least 30 cm at the perimeter of your property. **You can help create habitat for an endangered species!**
- Do not mow or dump yard waste beyond the limit of your property.

Make Your Yard Snake Friendly!

- Ponds, brush piles, and compost piles are micro-habitats that help snakes regulate their temperature and provide shelter.
- Avoid using landscape fabric with large holes such as nylon garden mesh where snakes can get caught. Window screening works well to keep wildlife out of your garden while not entangling snakes.
- Brush cut in the late fall or winter months, when snakes are hibernating.



SPOT A SNAKE?

#SubmitASighting on the Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas App to help track distributions and spatial trends of over 50 reptile and amphibian species across Ontario through this citizen science effort.

Free on the iTunes Store, Google Play Store, and online (ontarionature.org/atlas)

Or Report your sighting to the Ojibway Nature Centre:

Ojibway Nature Centre | ojibway.ca | e: ojibway@citywindsor.ca
p: 519-966-5852 | 5200 Matchette Road Windsor, ON N9C 4E8

The Parkway Trail: Visit the Parkway Trail to see the largest ecopassage dedicated to snakes in Canada. See hgparkway.ca for more information.