

# IMPERIAL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE PRESENTATION

Wellton Elementary School Third Grade  
Mrs. Davis & Mrs. Kennedy, Teachers  
January 13, 2011





Chuck and Betty Mulcahy welcome the Wellton Third Grade students to their “have snakes will travel” learning lab held in the Wellton Town Library on January 13, 2011.

Ramon is helping us learn that not all animals are reptiles.



Heidy taught us that a fox is a mammal and not a reptile.



Joey showed us that a bird is not a reptile either.



Esmeralda said that a frog is an amphibian, not a reptile.





**These are reptiles...** an air-breathing ,cold-blooded ,egg-laying, vertebrate with an outer covering of scales or plates and a bony skeleton, e.g. the tortoise, snake, or lizard.

# WOW - A TURTLE'S BACKBONE IN A SHELL...





Here is a young desert tortoise keeping an interested eye on the students.

# DESERT TORTOISE FACTS

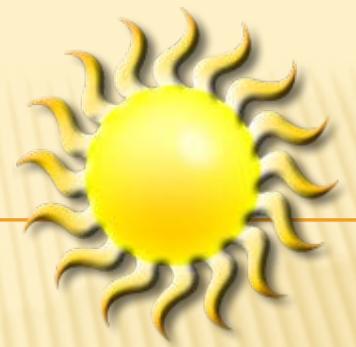
- ✘ The Desert Tortoise is at home in the hottest driest parts of North America. It avoids the midday heat by napping in its cool burrow. It gets all of its water through the plants that it eats. When you see a Desert Tortoise, resist the temptation to pick it up. One of the things a frightened tortoise will sometimes do is to release a flood of foul-smelling liquid when it is lifted off of the ground. This loss of water can be a serious problem for the animal if it can't replace the moisture soon.

**Look For :** A large tortoise with a tan to black shell with orange-like centers and a rounded head.

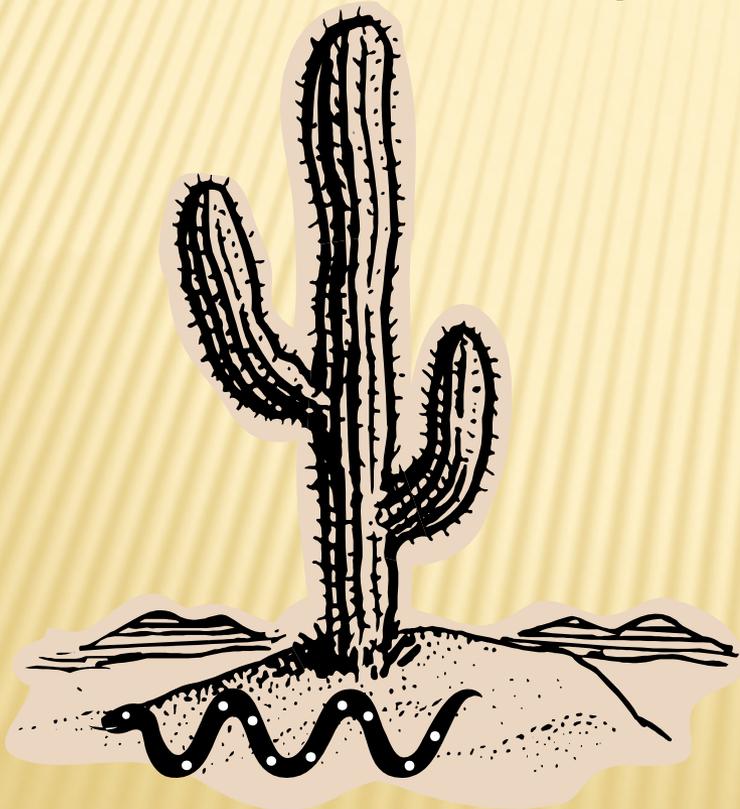
- ✘ **Length :** 8 1/2-14".
- ✘ **Habitat :** Deserts, dry rocky hillsides, canyon bottoms.
- ✘ **Range :** Arizona, Nevada, southern California.



# DID YOU KNOW?



Snakes eat bugs, rats, mice. Hawks kill snakes, birds. This is all part of the circle of life.



# LIFE CYCLE OF A SNAKE

- ✘ Some snakes lay eggs. Snake eggs are not hard like bird eggs. They are soft like leather. The baby snakes break out by using a special egg tooth. They lose the egg tooth after they are born.
- ✘ Some snakes (like copperheads, boa constrictors, rattlesnakes, and garter snakes) give birth to live babies. They do not lay eggs.
- ✘ Once baby snakes are born, they must eat so they can grow.
- ✘ Snakes start shedding their skin by rubbing up against rocks and other hard places. Once the skin is loose, they crawl out of the old layer.
- ✘ Snakes mate so they can have new babies.



Joseph, Gabriel, and Byron ... our future brightest scientists.

# WHY SNAKES BITE?

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Have you ever thought about going through life with no arms, no legs and only your teeth to survive? Well, that's the life of a snake.

Snakes bite for two reasons:

1. To protect themselves
2. To eat.



# MORE INTERESTING FACTS

- ✘ Pythons can constrict their prey by squeezing the air out.
- ✘ Vipers use their fangs to guide food down the tongue and then the throat muscles pull the food down the digestive tract.
- ✘ Rattlesnakes are the fastest striking snake. If they break off a fang, they have another behind it.
- ✘ The California King Snake is the king of all snakes because it can eat other snakes – poison and all.
- ✘ The tongue of a snake is forked to allow it to smell.

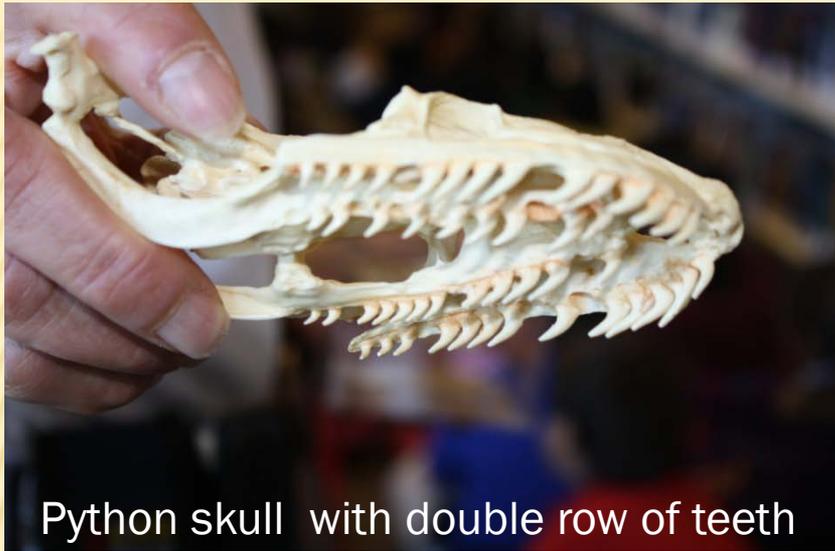


# MODELING A SNAKE'S SURVIVAL TRICK

When threatened, a snake might pretend to die or run away. When it pretends to die, it will make its mouth bleed, poop, and flop over on its back and play dead. Here are some fabulous actors modeling the snake's survival tricks.



Special thanks to Clarissa, Savanna, and Gabe O. and Gabe A. for this brave role playing. Thank goodness, no pooping!!



Python skull with double row of teeth



Viper skull





One of our Librarians, Deanna, is showing us the proper way to stroke a snake. That is with two fingers moving with the scales, gently, gently, gently...

# NOW IT IS OUR TURN... ONE AT A TIME PLEASE...



Estela



Erik



Andrew  
and Mark



Lisa, Savanna, Nayeli



**A big BULLDOG thank you to our friends at the IMPERIAL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. The lessons we learned today will help us be better friends to our desert dwelling neighbors. Slowly, but steadily, we will continue to make our world better for all life living in it.**