

Rare Garter Snake Needs Your Help!



It's Not Poisonous!

Found here in Oak Creek, the narrow-headed garter snake is distinguished by its long triangular shaped head and dark checks on a gray/tan body.

This garter snake spends most of its time foraging for fish, frogs, and tadpoles in the water or basking in the sun near the creek's edge.

Did You Know?

- Unknowing, individuals often kill garter snakes thinking they are poisonous.
- Once common throughout Oak Creek, narrow-headed garter snakes are no longer found downstream of Oak Creek Canyon. Despite this, the population of narrow-headed garter snakes in Oak Creek is one of the few populations that remain in existence today.
- Narrow-headed garter snakes are threatened by: the introduction of non-natives such as bass, crayfish, and bullfrogs; vehicles using low water crossings; recreationists killing them; and alteration of stream bank and aquatic habitat from high levels of recreational use.

How You Can Help!

- ◆ Because they are not a threat, there is no need to kill or relocate them.
- ◆ Please, leave garter snakes in the water and in the wild. Handling them causes stress and overheating and they do not adapt well to captivity.
- ◆ When driving over low water crossings, watch for young garter snakes warming themselves in shallow water.
- ◆ Keep pets leashed to reduce disturbance to garter snakes.
- ◆ Minimize disturbance to aquatic and bank vegetation by staying near developed recreation sites and by stepping on rocks when recreating around the creek.
- ◆ Do not release live bait, especially crayfish, into the creek.

