

SNAKES

In Germany, snakes are protected by law (§44 Federal Nature Conservation Law). **It is forbidden to kill them without Host Nation Nature Protection Agency approval and a proper permit.**

Bites of venomous species are life threatening and bites of non-venomous species are painful. Regardless if the bite is from a venomous or non-venomous snake, it is necessary to seek medical treatment to prevent infection of the puncture wound.



European Adder
Credit: John Cancalosi

European Adder or “Kreuzotter”

Vipera berus; **venomous**

In search of dry land for sun-basking, these snakes can be found in a variety of locations, including rocky hillsides, hedgerows, meadows, and edges of woods. They typically have a distinct, dark zig-zag pattern extending the length of their bodies, with a black “V” or “X” shape on the back of the head. Adults grow to an average length of 60-90 cm. They are not typically aggressive and only bite when alarmed. **If bitten by a European adder, seek medical treatment immediately!**



European Grass Snake
Credit: Wilma van Holten

European Grass Snake or “Ringelnatter”

Natrix natrix; **non-venomous**

Also known as the ringed or water snake, this snake is often found near freshwater systems next to open woodland habitat. They are typically dark green or brown in color, with a characteristic yellow band behind the head. When fully grown, the females are 90-110 cm long and the males are 40-60 cm long. The grass snake’s primary defenses are to produce a garlic-smelling fluid or to feign death, but if threatened, they can still bite.



For more information, please contact USAG Bavaria, Directorate of Public Works (DPW)
Environmental Division, DSN 475-8222 (CIV 09641-83-8222)

www.bavaria.army.mil/environmental
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Smooth Snake or “Schlingnatter”

Coronella austriaca; **non-venomous**

The smooth snake prefers dry areas, such as rock outcrops or mown grassland. Its coloration ranges from brown to gray to rusty-red, and it is distinguished by two rows of small, dark spots running down the length of the body. They also have a distinct black cap on their head. The average length of males and females is about 60-75 cm. These snakes may perform an aggressive defense display, and may bite if threatened.



Smooth Snake
Credit: Christian Fischer

European Slow Worm or “Blindschleiche”

Anguis fragilis; **non-venomous**

The slow worm, or blind worm, is not a snake, but a legless lizard. It is found in many environments, including farmland, grasslands, forests, parks and urban areas. They are brown to copper colored, and usually have a dark stripe in the middle of the back and running along the sides of the body. They are much smoother and shinier than snakes, and they do not have eyelids, as snakes do. Adults grow to be around 40 cm long. Slow worms are not able to bite humans and are completely harmless.



Slow Worm
Credit: Colin Seddon



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