

Snakes of the Pilbara



Identification, Bite Prevention
& First Aid



INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE



The purpose of this presentation is to clearly define:

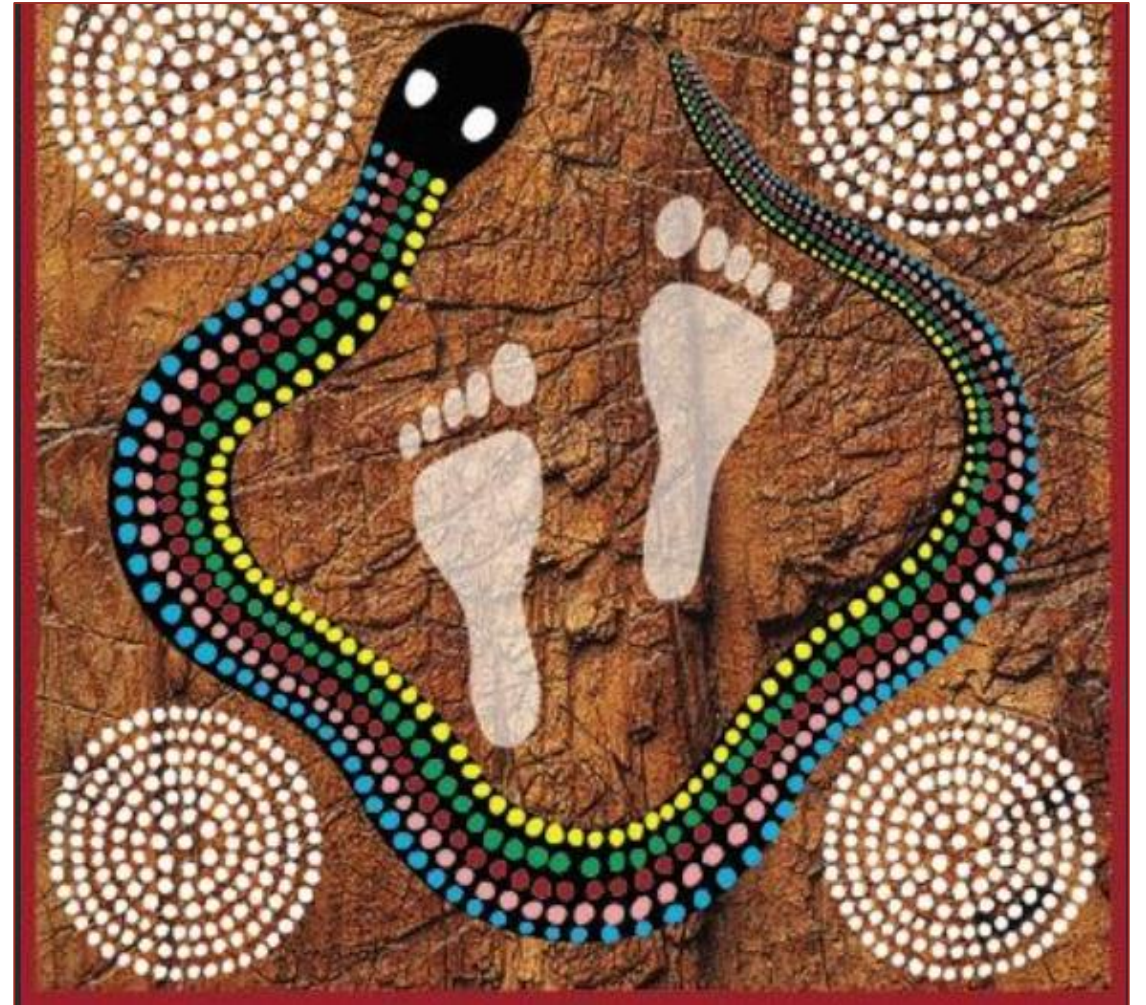
- Why snakes?
- The types and risk of snakes in the Pilbara
- Preventing the risk of a snake bite
- Symptoms of a venomous snake bite
- The appropriate medical response to snake bites

SNAKES – THE LOW DOWN

- Snakes come out of hibernation during the warmer months and will inevitably move into or near places where people live and work in search of food, a mate, or to bask in the sun.
- Cool dark areas such as under buildings, near sheds, around rubble and stored materials and in long grass are typical of where snakes may be found.
- Snakes are effective hunters and use their highly developed senses of sight, taste, hearing and touch to locate, recognize and track their prey.
- Snakes are an integral part of the natural environment and play an important role in wildlife ecosystems.

SO WHY SNAKES?

- Snakes maintain a balance in the food web – they can be both predator and prey. When a large prey population attracts and sustains a large snake population, those snakes become prey for birds, mammals and even other snakes.
- Snakes provide an easy, environmentally friendly, free and natural pest control service
- Snakes are indigenous to all parts of Australia and feature strongly in the Creation stories held by Aboriginal people in their paintings and carvings.
- The Snake has been used as a symbol of strength, creativity and continuity since ancient times across many societies



SNAKES OF THE PILBARA



MULGA or KING BROWN (Dangerously Venomous)

- Causes local pain and general feeling of unwellness but unlikely to be life threatening
- Does require Blacksnake antivenom to alleviate ongoing muscle destruction
- Last death – 1969
- Loves the burrows, logs and rock piles.
- Active at dusk and actually become nocturnal in the hotter parts of the year
- Mating occurs late spring in the Pilbara

SNAKES OF THE PILBARA



GWARDAR (WESTERN BROWN)

Dangerously Venomous

- Varies tremendously in colour and pattern
- Active in day and night dependent on temperature
- Loves inground burrows, under rocks, soil cracks, inside logs and will take refuge under rubbish or tin piles
- Active at dusk and actually become nocturnal in the hotter parts of the year
- Mating occurs around spring in the Pilbara

SNAKES OF THE PILBARA



PILBARA DEATH ADDER

Dangerously Venomous

- Mainly active at night but can be encountered in the day in cooler weather
- Love the fat tailed gecko
- Bear up to 13 live young in Autumn

SNAKES OF THE PILBARA

WHIP SNAKES

Venomous



- Very active early spring
- Feeds on frogs and lizard eggs
- Shelters beneath rocks
- Lays eggs in early summer

SNAKES OF THE PILBARA



Ringed Brown Snake

Venomous

- Varies in colour from salmon pink to orange and olive green
- Active in day and night
- Shelters in ground debris and animal burrows
- Bite causes local pain but may go unnoticed if bitten at night

SNAKES OF THE PILBARA



Rosens Snake –



Orange Naped Snake



NW Shovel Nosed Snake



Pilbara Bandy Bandy

PYTHONS OF THE PILBARA



Pygmy Python



Stimsons Python



Black headed Python



Olive Python

Preventing a Snake Bite

- Minimise the food sources for snakes by removing anything that may attract rodents or frogs
- Reduce rubbish/materials where a snake could shelter
- Remind work colleagues about the increased presence of snakes during high risk times
- Wear gloves and boots when moving stored materials and rubbish – they will give some protection
- An increased awareness of snakes is the best protection. The snake will not be looking for you, so be alert and on the look out for snakes.



Symptoms of a Venomous Snake Bite

- Severe pain around the bite (may come on later)
- Swelling bruising or bleeding from the bite (including bite marks)
- Swollen and tender glands in the armpit or groin of the limb that has been bitten
- Feeling anxious
- Nausea
- Dizziness/Blurred Vision
- Headache
- Breathing difficulties and problems swallowing
- Blood oozing from gums
- Collapse, paralysis, coma or even death

There are about 2 deaths each year in Australia from venomous snake bites

Medical Response to Snake Bites

You should always provide emergency care if you or someone else is bitten by a snake including CPR

Keep calm and follow these steps:

- Get the person away from the snake
- Ensure they rest and help them stay calm
- Call (000) and ask for an ambulance
- Apply a pressure immobilisation bandage
- Don't wash the bite area – venom left on the skin can help identify the snake
- If you can't use a pressure immobilisation bandage because the bite is on the trunk or stomach, apply constant firm pressure.

Do not apply a tourniquet, cut the wound or attempt to suck the venom out



IF YOU FIND A SNAKE

- Do not approach or aggravate it in any way
- Most bites occur when people accidentally step on snakes or while attempting to kill them
- As the warmer days of spring approach, snakes become more active as they leave their winter retreats in search of a mate and food
- If you find a snake in your house or workplace, follow the advice above and refer to the appropriate snake removal procedure.

