



Let's slither into the world of garter snakes, one of the most common snakes in North America! These cool critters are not very large, usually between two to three feet long, and they come in a variety of colors like red, green, blue, and yellow. They are easily recognizable by the long stripes that run lengthwise down their bodies, which is actually how they got their name (like the stripes on a garter belt). While they might look scary to some, they are actually quite harmless and interesting creatures.



Continuing from their interesting look, do you know that garter snakes have a surprisingly diverse diet? They're not picky eaters at all and are known to eat almost anything they can catch including slugs, worms, frogs, and even small birds. Some garter snakes have also been known to swim and catch small fish for their meals. This variety in their diet makes them very adaptable to different environments.

Speaking of different environments, garter snakes can be found living in a wide range of habitats. They prefer to live near water bodies, but you can also find them in forests, grasslands, and sometimes even in your backyard. During their life cycle, garter snakes hibernate in the winter, and mate and give birth to live young in the summer. Unlike most snakes, garter snakes give birth to live young instead of laying eggs!



Not just their unique life cycle, garter snakes have a special relationship with us humans and other animals too. While they may seem scary, they can actually be helpful by eating pests that can harm our gardens and homes. They have some natural predators like hawks, raccoons, and foxes, and when threatened, they produce a foul-smelling scent to ward off predators. Aren't garter snakes fascinating? Despite their small size, they play a big role in our ecosystem!



Solve each problem.

Use the article to answer the question.

- 1) How long are most garter snakes?
 - A. They are usually more than six feet long.
 - B. They are usually less than one foot long.
 - C. They are usually between two to three feet long.
 - D. They are usually four to five feet long.
- 2) What do garter snakes do when they are threatened?
 - A. They play dead
 - B. They rattle their tail to scare off predators
 - C. They make a loud screeching noise
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- 3) What is a unique trait of the garter snake's life cycle?
 - A. Garter snakes only lay a single egg.
 - B. Garter snakes lay eggs in sand.
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 - D. Garter snakes adopt other snakes' babies.
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 - A. In spring
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 - C. In summer
 - D. In winter
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 - A. Burrow in the ground and eat bugs
 - B. Swim and catch fish
 - C. Climb trees and eat bird eggs
 - D. Chase insects and birds in the air
- 6) What do garter snakes look like?
 - A. They are long and have a solid color.
 - B. They are long and have stripes running down their bodies.
 - C. They have spots all over their bodies.
 - D. They are short and have no stripes.
- 7) When do garter snakes usually give birth?
 - A. In the fall
 - B. In the spring
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- 8) Which animal is not a listed predator of garter snakes?
 - A. Sheep
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 - A. Near water bodies
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 - C. Under the ground
 - D. In caves
- 10) Why are garter snakes called 'garter' snakes?
 - A. They live in garter belt factories
 - B. They wear garter belts
 - C. They use garter belts to catch their prey
 - D. Because of the long stripes that run lengthwise on their bodies



Determine if the statements is something the animal would say (W) or it it is not something the animal would say (N).

- 11) "In the winter months, you can find us garter snakes sunbathing."
- 12) "Did you know that I give birth to live young instead of laying eggs like most snakes?"
- 13) "Even though I might scare you, I actually help by eating pests and other small creatures."
- 14) "When I am in danger, I release a yucky smell to protect myself from predators."
- 15) "I'm a tiny snake, just an inch long."
- 16) "As a garter snake, I strictly stick to eating red berries in the wild."
- 17) "Unlike other snakes, we garter snakes lay thousands of eggs."
- 18) "You cannot find a single garter snake like me in North America. We live only in the African jungles."
- 19) "I am quite a giant among my kind, measuring up to six feet long!"
- 20) "I make my home around lakes and forests."
- 21) "We garter snakes often avoid water bodies and prefer arid desert areas."
- 22) "I eat all kinds of things, from slugs and worms to even small birds."

Determine if the statement is a fact or opinion based on the information in the article.

- 23) Garter snakes usually give birth to live young instead of laying eggs.
- 24) It is fascinating how garter snakes give birth to live young instead of laying eggs.
- 25) Garter snakes can be found in different environments; from grasslands to water bodies.
- 26) Seeing a garter snake slither through the grass is a scary sight.
- 27) Garter snakes are named after the stripes that run lengthwise on their bodies.
- 28) Garter snakes are the best because they eat pests that harm our gardens and homes.
- 29) When threatened, garter snakes release a smelly scent to deter predators.
- 30) Garter snakes eat a variety of food including slugs, worms, frogs, and small birds.
- 31) Garter snakes are the most interesting snakes because of their multiple colors.
- 32) Garter snakes make the best pets, especially because they are not venomous.

Determine if the statement is true or false.

- 33) Garter snakes give birth in the summer.
- 34) Garter snakes avoid water at all costs.
- 35) Garter snakes can eat small birds.
- 36) Garter snakes only eat small plants.
- 37) Garter snakes usually live near water bodies.
- 38) Garter snakes are not found in North America.
- 39) Garter snakes lay eggs.
- 40) Garter snakes can only be found in swampy areas.
- 41) Garter snakes produce a foul-smelling scent to ward off predators.
- 42) Garter snakes give birth to live young.

Determine which choice is the expanded form of the underlined contraction.

- 43)** When they're scared, garter snakes might give off a smelly musk that'll make predators leave them alone.
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Determine if the sentence is a declarative(d), exclamatory(e), interrogative(i) or imperative(m).

- 48) Garter snakes eat small animals like insects and worms.
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| 1. _____ | 26. _____ | 51. _____ |
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|---------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. <u>C</u> | 26. <u>opinion</u> | 51. <u>declarative</u> |
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| 23. <u>fact</u> | 48. <u>declarative</u> | |
| 24. <u>opinion</u> | 49. <u>interrogative</u> | |
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