



NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR AIR AND STREAM IMPROVEMENT, INC.

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To All Interested Parties

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service was recently petitioned to list the eastern diamondback rattlesnake as a threatened or endangered species. The eastern diamondback was historically found in the lower Coastal Plain from North Carolina to Louisiana. As the Service reviews the status of the eastern diamondback, the National Council for Air & Stream Improvement, Inc. (NCASI), which is a non-profit research center that provides technical information on environmental issues for the forest products industry, is trying to gather data to improve understanding of its distribution and habitat associations.

If you encounter an eastern diamondback rattlesnake, we would greatly appreciate you completing the attached survey form and returning a copy (printed or electronic) to NCASI. The electronic form is "fillable," meaning you can enter your survey response on your computer using Adobe Acrobat Reader. Once you have entered your data and saved the file, you can e-mail the file to snakesurvey@ncasi.org. Alternatively, you can complete a printed copy of the survey by hand and mail it to the address identified on the survey. If this snake was observed on land owned by a forest products company or of interest to a forest products company, you also may give the completed form to a company employee or leave it at the company's offices. There is information near the bottom of the survey form and on the page following the survey that will help you identify the eastern diamondback rattlesnake and distinguish it from the timber (or canebrake) rattlesnake.

NCASI will be collecting these forms through December 31, 2013. Following that date, data collection will cease and NCASI will compile results from surveys, remove any information that would identify individual respondents and/or landowners, and forward a summary of results to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

We thank you in advance for your assistance with this important survey.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "T. Bently Wigley".

T. Bently Wigley

Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake
Observation Form

Observer name: _____ Affiliation: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____ AM PM

State _____ County _____

GPS coordinates (if available): _____

Property owned or managed by (optional): _____

Temperature (check one): <40F 41–50F 51–60F 61–70F 71–80F 81–90F >90F

Snake alive? Yes No

Estimated length (check one): <1ft 1–2 ft 2–3 ft 3–4 ft- 4–5 ft > 5 ft

Habitat where snake was observed (check one):

Dirt Road Paved Road Open Field (few or no trees)

Pine Forest Mixed pine/hardwood forest Hardwood Forest

Non-Forest Wetland Other (describe): _____

If snake is observed in forest (check one response for each stand characteristic):

Stand age: <10 yrs 11–20 yrs 21–30 yrs 31–40 yrs 41–50 yrs >50 yrs Uneven-aged

Basal area: <40 ft² 41–60 ft² 61–80 ft² >80 ft²

Stand origin: Planted Natural

Canopy closure: Open (abundant sunlight reaches ground) Closed (little or no light reaches ground)

If pine forest, dominant overstory species:

Longleaf pine Loblolly pine Slash pine Pond pine Other _____

Comments: _____

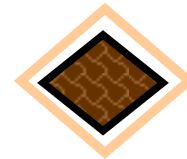
NOTE: Observe the snake only from a safe distance. Distinguishing characteristics of the eastern diamondback rattlesnake are: crisp thin yellow diamonds on its back enclosing black pigment centered with brown; densely black face with two thin slanted yellow lines on either side of the black eye; olive-brown tail never with bold black and white "coon tail" bands. See photos on page 2.

Mail completed forms to: National Council for Air and Stream Improvement, Inc., PO Box 340317, Clemson, SC 29634-0317. Or, send electronic versions by email to: snakesurvey@ncasi.org. NCASI will compile results from surveys, remove any information that would identify individual respondents and/or landowners, and forward an analysis of results to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The primary objective of the survey is to document the range of forest conditions occupied by eastern diamondback rattlesnakes.



Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake

- Diamond pattern on back
- Slanted whitish stripes near eyes



Diamonds vs. Chevrons



Timber or Canebrake Rattlesnake

- Chevron or crossband pattern on back
- No slanted eye stripes
- Reddish stripe along middle of back



Photos courtesy of the Orianne Society
<http://www.oriannesociety.org/>

Eastern diamondback photo credits

Upper left: Kevin Stohlgren

Upper right: Heidi Hall

Lower left: Kevin Stohlgren

Timber/canebrake rattlesnake photo credits

Upper left: Heidi Hall

Lower right: Kevin Stohlgren