



World Snake Day

What's your reaction when you see a snake? Most of us run away or try to find the closest stick or rock to kill it. From the time 'Eve ate the apple', snakes have had a bad reputation. These animals however, are an important part of ecosystems as snakes play both the predator and prey role. They make for a healthy snack for hawks, eagles, weasels, foxes and more. They also help control pest populations. Snakes also act as 'ecosystem engineers.' Rodents eat plant seeds, then snakes eat the rodents. This makes snakes secondary seed dispersers, helping plants find new places to grow.

World Snake Day is an important day when it comes to increasing awareness about the different species of snake all around the world. This day is celebrated on July 16. GUYANA, as part of the South American continent, is swamped with rainforests and jungles, which has the type of terrain where snakes and other wildlife creatures thrive. It has been reported over time that this continent has some of the most dangerous, as well as some of the most enthralling snakes in the world.

Why celebrate snakes?

Did you know that there are more than 3,5000 species of snakes around the world? Because of this, it is not going to be a challenge for you to find a snake that fascinates you and interests you that you may not have heard of before, even if you are someone who is interested in snakes and you have a pet snake of your own! So, this is one of the good reasons why to research snakes and learn more about them on this date. After all, there is so much that you can learn!

Of the 3,500 species of a snake around the world, there are only around 600 that are venomous. This is less than 25% of snakes! There are only 200 species of snake that pose a considerable risk to human life as well. Therefore, snakes are nowhere near as worrying or scary as we think they are. Of course, this does not mean that you should go up and

start petting any snake that you come across! However, it is definitely something to think about. Perhaps we give these animals a much harder time than they deserve?

Do you know that snakes are threatened all around the world?

With the deteriorating situation of deforestation, climate change, and several other factors that are causing a decline in the habitats of snakes, it is imperative that we collectively put in an effort to preserve their well-being. Snakes are found in every continent except Antarctica, in the sea, forests, deserts, prairies, and they even live among us sometimes. Snakes consume many different animals including insects, small rodents and frogs. Snakes eat their prey whole because their lower jaw can separate from the upper jaw. Some very large snakes can even eat small deer, pigs, monkeys, and even primates. Fortunately, snakes are not widely hunted. However, their numbers are still declining due to deforestation and climate change. Which has, in turn, caused the deterioration of their habitats and a lesser amount of prey available.

Here are some interesting facts about these amazing creatures:

Where do snakes live?

Snakes are found in every continent except Antarctica in the sea, forests, deserts, prairies, and even your backyard or garage.

What do snakes eat?

Snakes consume many different animals including insects, small rodents and frogs. Snakes eat their prey whole because their lower jaw can separate from the upper jaw. Very large snakes can even eat small deer, pigs, monkeys, and even primates.

How do snakes behave?

Snakes rely on the environment to regulate their body temperature. They spend as long in the warm sun as they need to in order to get warm, and when they become too warm,

they find shade to cool off. They are generally not aggressive unless they are hunting or feel like they need to defend themselves. They shed their skin three to six times a year.

How do they defend themselves?

Snakes use a variety of techniques defend themselves, including camouflage, biting and envenoming those they feel are threatening them. Sometimes they simply curl up in a tight ball to hopefully avoid being seen.

Why are some snakes endangered?

Fortunately, snakes are not widely hunted, but their numbers are still declining due to deforestation and climate change causing the deterioration of their habitats and a declining amount of available prey.

As mentioned earlier, there are many different species of snakes, and so you can spend some time learning about them and their various qualities and features. For example, the Barbados thread snake is the smallest snake in the world. This serpent is actually smaller than a nightcrawler, coming in at only approximately four inches. In terms of the heaviest snake, this honor goes to the green anaconda. The reticulated python is the longest snake in the world. If you spend some time doing a bit of reading, we are sure that you will be fascinated with the results.

Snakes are beautiful creatures which need to be respected, and this can only be done once we learn and read more about these beauties.

Sources

<https://www.republicworld.com/world-news/global-event-news/world-snake-day-day-history-meaning-significance-celebration.html>

You can share your ideas and questions by sending letters to: “Our Earth, Our Environment”, C/O ECEA Programme, Environmental Protection Agency, Ganges Street, Sophia, GEORGETOWN, or email us at:

eit.epaguyana@gmail.com. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram and subscribe to our YouTube channel.