

Garter Snakes- Educational Info

Garter snakes belong to the genus *Thamnophis*. These are most commonly seen snakes and they live in various habitats. These snakes will have colored stripes against the checkered or plain background. Some of the snakes will have yellow or red stripes on the body. But the snake can change the color according to the surrounding in the thicket. These snakes can only grow to the length of three feet but can live up to ten full years. Garter snakes depend on the eye for catching the prey than the sound, and smell. In these snakes the Jacobson organ is located in the roof of the mouth. This organ is useful in analyzing the smell, but the utility is limited. These snakes can move much faster which makes it for them to catch the prey with ease. The garter snakes of the wild will feed on invertebrates aquatic, birds, mammals, and amphibians that are small in size. These snakes like eat frogs mostly. In case of not availability of the same, they never mind feeding on other animals that are mentioned above. Garter snakes that live in water prefer snails, small fish, leeches, salamanders, aquatic invertebrates etc. Little larger garter snakes such as *T.C. gigas* can eat young ones of the waterfowls. These snakes kill the prey before eating. In case the prey is larger than these snakes, use solid structures like rock as a support till the swallowing get completed. Garter snakes try to maintain their body temperature within 22-32 degree Celsius. In order to warm their body they can be found lying over the rock or part of the tree above the water body. The reproduction as far as garter snakes are concerned, the males are more sexually active than the females. The litter size will vary from 10 to 30 and the average size of the litter will be 22. The average size of the young one at the time of hatching will be around 24 centimeters. From the day one, these young ones will happen to be on their own and are not dependent on their mother for food. Feeding in captivity these animals can survive in the captivity. As far as feeding in captivity is concerned earthworms are the best. But the earthworm must be cleaned before being offered to the garter snakes in order to avoid the pesticides and herbicides. The fish can be given to these snakes but the fish must be small. Frozen fish can be provided but vitamin B-1 must be added as there will be deficiency of same in the frozen fish.

About the Author

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