

The  
Rattlesnake  
Conservancy

# RATTLESNAKE HABITATS

*Before you begin...*



This hands on, sensory activity is designed to encourage critical thinking, open ended play, and empower children with the knowledge to be aware of their surroundings!

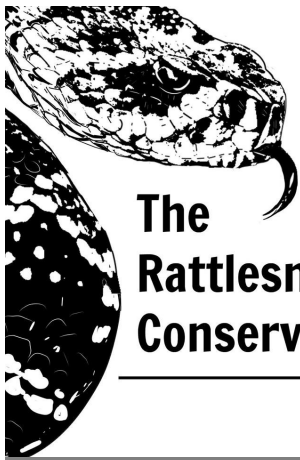
You can encourage children to peacefully coexist with snakes (and all wild animals) by keeping their distance - many venomous bites occur when someone attempts to handle, catch, or accidentally touches or steps on a snake. Show children areas on your property where snakes may be found, teach them to watch their step, and never to stick their hands or feet into places they can't see like under logs, plants, or into tall grass.

## *Directions*

1. Prepare the activity by filling a large bucket with play sand and organizing your natural materials in a way that is inviting and encourages play and exploration.
2. Follow the included classroom information sheet to discuss animal habitats with your class. Ask questions! Did you know that rattlesnakes have needs just like you? If a rattlesnake was in this class, where might you find it? Why?! What about outside of this classroom? Have you ever found a rattlesnake? Where was it?
3. Begin playing! Allow children to use the natural materials to build their own "rattlesnake habitat" in the sand. Remember that this activity is open ended—there is no right or wrong way to build a habitat!

## You will need...

1. Classroom information sheet (included)
2. Natural materials from your environment like sticks, leaves, grass, branches, pine cones, straw, moss, etc.
3. Play sand
4. Large bucket



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*did you know...*



Animals have basic needs- just like you! Plants, animals, and even humans choose habitats for many different reasons depending on their needs.

Florida's native rattlesnakes can be found in varied habitat! From the uplands containing palmetto thickets and gopher tortoise burrows to the marshy, swampy bottomlands—our state is perfectly suited for rattlesnake habitats.

Some ideal habitats for our native rattlesnakes include pine flatwoods, longleaf pine and turkey oak, sandy scrub areas, coastal barrier islands, river beds, hardwood hammocks, pine flatwoods, cane thickets, marshes, and cypress swamps!



## *Time to build your own habitat!*

The place where an animal lives in the environment is known as its habitat. The town you live in would be your habitat. This is where you sleep, play, find food and spend most of your time. Think like a rattlesnake and use these supplies to make a perfect habitat! Keep in mind important needs like a source of food, water, and shelter. Where would a rattlesnake take shelter? How does this change how you approach your environment?