



Keeping Unwanted Animals Out of Your Yard: **Snakes**

Most snakes are harmless, but that doesn't matter to those who have a fear of snakes. For those to whom snakes make their skin crawl and their bodies uncontrollably shutter, here are a few ways to keep them away from your home:

1. **Habitat.** An ideal snake-free yard would have a large span of low-cut grass with no shelter for a snake to hide. Snakes like places to hide under and they will choose anything close to the ground to avoid potential predators and to escape the elements. Do not leave boards, tin, or plastics lying flat on the ground that snakes can crawl under. Do not pile up wood logs, sticks, rocks, leaves, or pine straw in your yard for extended periods of time. Keep in mind that anything you leave lying around on the ground, can become a potential hiding place for a snake.
2. **Cats and Dogs.** Although, snakes don't like cats and dogs, having a pet will not reduce the chance of a snake basking in the sun in your yard. They will avoid your pet whenever possible, but sometimes, snakes are simply out looking for a meal and a place to hide when they enter your yard and are just passing through.
3. **Snake repellents** can be useful in keeping snakes out of your yard. Snake repellents emit an odor that snakes don't like and some products affect the sensory system of snakes which helps keep them away. The repellent will not kill the snake. Applying a band around your yard eight to twelve inches wide can keep snakes from passing over the perimeter and entering the yard. If you know you have a snake in the yard, get it out first or you will trap the snake in the yard with the treatment.
4. **Natural repellants.** Marigolds are known to distract snakes. Planting marigolds in your yard is a natural deterrence that will not harm the snake. You may want to plant the flowers around buildings and in areas where you have seen snakes in the past. You can also grow your own natural border to keep the snakes from entering the yard.
5. **In your home.** If you find a snake has entered your home, you can try to catch it yourself. However, if the snake is venomous or if you are not sure it is venomous, you should call animal control. In areas where snakes are prevalent, animal control is usually accustomed to removing snakes from homes. If you know the snake is harmless and it is relatively small, you can place a glue board near the area where the snake was last seen. A heat lamp can help draw the snake to your board. Just be careful that you don't create a fire hazard with a heat lamp or a light bulb too close to other objects. Once the snake is stuck to the board, a little cooking oil applied will loosen the snake from the board. If you try to catch a small snake with your hands, be sure you have on thick work gloves. Snakes will bite, venomous or not.