



THE WILDLIFE CENTER OF VIRGINIA

P.O. BOX 1557 • WAYNESBORO, VIRGINIA 22980 • 540-942-WILD • FAX 540-943-WILD

CELEBRATE WORLD SNAKE DAY WITH THE WILDLIFE CENTER OF VIRGINIA

Learn how to help wild snakes, including when to call for help, and when to leave them alone on World Snake Day, this Saturday, July 16

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Waynesboro, Virginia – July 14, 2022 Each year on July 16, wildlife enthusiasts, educators, and advocates celebrate a special holiday – World Snake Day. The exact origins of this holiday are difficult to know for sure, but the overall messages are clear. Despite facing many of the same threats that affect other wildlife species – habitat loss and degradation, global climate change, human activity, etc. – **negative attitudes and misinformed public perceptions often make conservation efforts difficult.**

To celebrate this holiday, Center educators will host a **live-streaming virtual discussion** with several snake-expert guest speakers. Dr. Chris Jenkins, co-founder of the [Orianne Society](#) and one of the leaders in snake conservation, and Bonnie Keller, a lifelong snake advocate who recently trained Center staff members on venomous snake handling.

Event watchers will learn about the natural history of Virginia's native snakes, the challenges they are facing in wild, and the conservation measures taken to protect them. The stream will take place on [the Wildlife Center's Facebook page](#) on **Saturday, July 16 at 2:00 p.m.**

The Center encourages learning about native snakes in Virginia any day of the year by reading their recently posted News Article: [Celebrating World Snake Day 2022](#). The article highlights species commonly admitted as patients to the teaching and research hospital, tips for living side by side with wild snakes, and **directions for identifying venomous vs non-venomous species.**

Wildlife enthusiasts can learn more about Virginia's snakes in other ways, too. [S1:E6 of Untamed: Life is Wild](#), an award-winning television series co-produced by the Wildlife Center of Virginia and VPM, features snakes -- **a family of wild animals that invoke fear in many people.** During this episode, Center staff members highlight the beauty and mystery of snakes and encourage others to foster a respect for this highly misunderstood group of animals. Common causes of admission and injury are shared, and host Ed Clark gives viewers several ways to help our wild snake neighbors. Each episode of *Untamed* is available to watch online for free, via <https://www.wildlifecenter.org/untamed>.

However you celebrate World Snake Day, remember these simple Do's and Do Not's to help snakes year-round:



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- **Do** leave wild snakes alone. If you see a snake in your yard, the best thing to do is let it go on its way. After all, it's likely helping reduce pests around your home and garden. **Do not** keep a wild snake as a pet. It's important to keep wildlife in the wild where they belong.
- **Do** prioritize [exclusion methods](#) as a long-term solution for snake-proofing your home and property. **Do not** use [glue traps](#); they are inhumane and lead to prolonged struggling and suffering for the animal.
- **Do** remain aware of your surroundings while hiking or spending time outdoors. **Do not** put your hands and feet in places you can't see. Snakes often hide under logs and crevices.
- **Do** treat all snakes with the respect and dignity they inherently deserve. **Do not** kill snakes. Killing a snake doesn't keep other snakes away, and even though you may be uneasy around them, they are important members of our ecosystem. It's also illegal to kill snakes in Virginia unless there is an imminent threat to one's personal health and safety.

For more information and to arrange an interview, contact Public Affairs Manager Alex Wehrung. A collection of high-quality photographs of snake species seen at the Center are available upon request.

Press Availability: To schedule an interview, contact Public Affairs Manager Alex Wehrung. Wildlife Center of Virginia staff are available Monday through Friday during regular business hours for virtual interviews about snake patients, online events, and their education and outreach work. A collection of high-quality photographs of patients and ambassador animals are available upon request.

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The Wildlife Center of Virginia is an internationally acclaimed teaching and research hospital for wildlife and conservation medicine. The nonprofit Center has cared for more than 90,000 wild animals, representing 200 species of native birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. The Center's public education programs share insights gained through the care of injured and orphaned wildlife, in hopes of reducing human damage to wildlife.