

Copperhead (*Agkistrodon contortrix*)

- Average adult length is 2-3 feet.
- In Florida, Copperheads occur in a small area of Florida's Panhandle just west of Tallahassee, mainly in the Apalachicola River valley but also in Escambia county in Blackwater River State Forest just south of the Alabama state line.
- Copperheads typically inhabit areas near rivers, swamps, streams, and ravines in Florida. Infrequently, Copperheads may also be found in suburban settings.
- Small rodents and rabbits comprise the main part of their diet but they also eat lizards, snakes, frogs and birds.
- Like all vipers (Family Viperidae), Copperheads give birth to live young.

Florida Distribution: Only parts of the Panhandle



Appearance

Copperheads are thick-bodied snakes that are generally light brown to gray. They have large bands of darker brown along their backs that appear as hourglass shapes. They have an alternating pattern of lighter and darker bands that provide them with exceptional camouflage in forested areas where they live. Copperheads have keeled scales. Young Copperheads look very similar to adults, but their tail tips are bright yellow.

People oftentimes misidentify juvenile Cottonmouths as Copperheads. In Florida if you find one outside the Apalachicola River valley, it probably is a juvenile Cottonmouth rather than a Copperhead. You can differentiate the two by examining the dark bands on their bodies and their eye stripes. Juvenile Cottonmouths have many spots in their dark bands whereas Copperheads do not. Copperheads also lack the dark stripe through their eyes that is typical of Cottonmouths.



Adult Copperhead



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