

Eastern Coral Snake

- Average adult length is 1.5-2.5 feet.
- Coral snakes inhabit many habitat types: wet hammocks, swamp edges, flatwoods and scrubs.
- They are quite secretive, spending most of their lives underground or under objects such as logs.
- Unlike the other five venomous species in Florida, they are not in the viper family (Viperidae). They are in the same family (Elapidae) as cobras. Coral snakes lay eggs, whereas the other five venomous snakes in Florida give birth to live young.
- Coral snakes prey on lizards, snakes, and frogs.

Florida Distribution: Statewide except the southern Keys



Appearance

Coral snakes are brightly colored with red, yellow, and black rings that encircle the entire body. The wide red and black rings are separated by narrow yellow rings. The head has a blunt, black snout followed by a band of yellow. The tail is black and yellow. Coral snakes have smooth scales which give them a glossy appearance.



Coral Snake



Coral Snake

Two non-venomous species (Scarlet Kingsnake and Scarlet Snake) also have red, black, and yellow (or white) color patterns and may be confused with the Coral Snake. However, the arrangement of the colors differs between the non-venomous species and the Coral Snake. In the two non-venomous species red touches only black, but in Coral Snakes red only touches yellow. A way to remember the difference is the stoplight phrase "red, yellow, STOP!" If red and yellow are next to each other, like the colors of a stoplight, it is a Coral Snake.



Scarlet Snake



Scarlet Kingsnake