

NATURE RENAISSANCE

2025

Nature Renaissance

A Charitable Foundation



The charitable foundation Nature Renaissance implements projects aimed at preserving rare species of animals and plants, protecting water resources, restoring forests, and promoting environmental education.

Our mission is to bring together caring people who support environmental projects dedicated to preserving and protecting the environment for future generations.

Author of photos and texts

RYZHOV Maxim Konstantinovich



PhD in Biological Sciences, professional herpetologist, and author of over 60 scientific works (including one monograph) on the amphibians and reptiles of the Volga region. With more than 20 years of scientific activity, he has explored the entire Middle and Lower Volga, as well as parts of the Caucasus region.

Author of the blog "Herpetofauna of the Volga Region." In recent years, he has been actively collaborating with the charitable foundation Nature Renaissance.

December

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February

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January

2025

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Common European Viper

Vipera berus

One of the most well-known venomous snakes in Russia. Found almost everywhere except the southern regions. Its bite is painful but not very dangerous.



January

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March

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February

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Grass Snake

Natrix natrix

A snake familiar to everyone since school, easily distinguishable from other species. It is the largest grass snake in Russia (some individuals can reach up to 2 meters, though most are no longer than 120 cm).



February

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April

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March

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Western Sand Boa

Eryx jaculus

The rarest snake in the Volga region. In the Republic of Kalmykia, it was considered an extinct species for about 20 years until it was accidentally rediscovered in 2015. It is listed in the Red Data Book of the Russian Federation (Category 2 – a species in decline).



March

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May

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April

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Caspian Whip Snake

Dolichophis caspius

One of the most aggressive and largest snakes in Europe. When threatened, it does not hide but lunges with an open mouth, accompanied by loud hissing. Listed in the Red Data Book of Russia (Category 2 – declining species).



April

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June

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May

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Coin-marked Snake

Hemorrhois razergieri

In Russia, it is found only in the Republic of Dagestan. Its behavior and coloration resemble that of the blunt-nosed viper. It has toxic saliva, and bites cause temporary swelling. Its population is very low.



May

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July

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June

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Collared Dwarf Snake

Eirenis collaris

Found in Russia only in the Republic of Dagestan. It inhabits foothills with abundant rocks. It can be seen in spring during the breeding season. Then it disappears, and reappears only after rain.



June

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August

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July

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Smooth Snake

Coronella austriaca

The rarest snake in the Middle Volga region. Folklore suggests that its bite is more dangerous than that of a viper, but in reality, it has no venomous fangs and is completely harmless.



July

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September

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August

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Worm Snake

Xerotyphlops vermicularis

This snake resembles a large worm and is found in Russia only in Dagestan. It is the smallest snake species in the country (up to 38 cm in length, including the tail).



August

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October

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Eastern Steppe Ratsnake

Elaphe sauromates

In Latin, it is named after the ancient Sauromatian people who inhabited the vast Eurasian steppes from the 4th century BCE to the early centuries CE. Listed in the Red Data Book of Russia (Category 2 – declining species).



September

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November

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October

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Dice Snake

Natrix tessellata

In southern Russia, due to its distinctive pattern, it is called the "checkerboard snake" and is mistakenly believed to be a hybrid of a grass snake and a viper, as well as being the most dangerous snake. However, it is completely harmless and non-venomous.



October

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December

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Steppe Viper

Vipera renardi

Unlike other vipers, its diet is dominated not by small mammals but by insects. In summer, it feeds almost exclusively on grasshoppers, crickets, and locusts. As a result, its venom is less toxic and less dangerous to humans.



November

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Common European Viper

Vipera berus

Many consider black vipers to be a separate species—Nikolsky's Viper (*Vipera berus nikolskii*). However, most vipers in the Volga region are melanistic (have black coloration).



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JANUARY - Common European Viper



FEBRUARY - Grass Snake



MARCH - Western Sand Boa



APRIL - Caspian Whip Snake



MAY - Coin-marked Snake



JUNE - Collared Dwarf Snake



JULY - Smooth Snake



AUGUST - Worm Snake



SEPTEMBER - Eastern Steppe Ratsnake



OCTOBER - Dice Snake



NOVEMBER - Steppe Viper



DECEMBER - Common European Viper

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