



# NORTHERN RIBBONSNAKE

## Species at Risk

In Canada, the Northern Ribbonsnake (*Thamnophis sauritus septentrionalis*) is a species at risk and is divided into two separate populations. One population is found in a small area of Nova Scotia where it is classified as threatened. The second population is found south of the Canadian Shield in Ontario; where it is classified as special concern and is at risk of becoming threatened.

The Northern Ribbonsnake is a slender snake that is predominantly black with three contrasting yellow stripes, one down the middle of the back and the remaining two on each side. It also has a distinct white half moon spot in front of the eye. This snake has a long tail and a white to light brown chin and throat. The Northern Ribbonsnake is often mistaken with the more common Eastern Gartersnake.

The Northern Ribbonsnake is often found near the edges of wetlands, ponds, swamps, bogs and streams with nearby sunny open areas for basking. It hibernates underground in small mammal burrows during the winter months.

Primary threats to the Northern Ribbonsnake and is the loss and fragmentation of wetlands and shorelines, declines in prey such as frogs and the accidental or deliberate killing of snakes.

It is illegal to search for, harass or capture a species at risk or destroy their habitat.

Picture courtesy of Rob Tervo

References: COSEWIC 2002. COSEWIC assessment and status report on the eastern ribbonsnake *Thamnophis sauritus*. Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Ottawa. vi + 24 pp.

