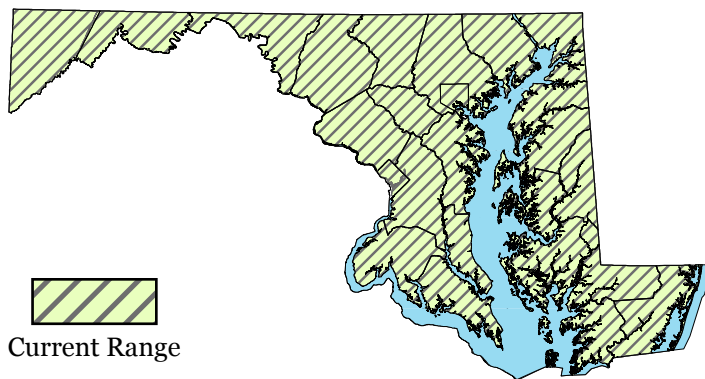


# Common Ribbonsnake

## *Thamnophis sauritus sauritus*

### Identification

The common ribbonsnake gets its name from the dorsal pattern of three yellow or cream colored stripes that run the length of its very slender body. The color between the stripes is a dark green or brown. Its belly is a uniform color that matches the stripes. It has a very long tail (1/3 of its body length) and a yellow patch in front of each eye. They are viviparous, giving birth to live young in mid to late summer. They are not a large snake, usually growing no longer than 3 feet in length. Ribbonsnakes feed on fish, frogs, tadpoles, and salamanders and, not being constrictors, they swallow their prey alive.



### Range/Habitat

The common ribbonsnake is found statewide, but is uncommon in western Maryland. They are semi-aquatic and are usually found in close association with water bodies such as ponds, streams and wetlands. It is often found basking on shrubs, grasses, or tree branches that overhang the water. When frightened they will usually escape to the water.

### General Information

The common ribbonsnake bears a close resemblance to one other species of snake native to Maryland, the eastern gartersnake. Both have three dorsal stripes, but the gartersnake has a checkerboard pattern of dark spots between the stripes and lacks the yellow patch in front of the eyes.

