**Checkered Garter Snake**

**Native:** Southwest United States and Mexico

**Predators:** cats, birds, racoons, skunk, lizards and other snakes.

**Prey:** Fish, Amphibians, and lizards

**Facts:**

* They are a smaller species of colubrid that can grow to be around 42 inches in length.
* There are usually a dark green and black in color but it can vary in certain parts of their range.
* Life span in the wild is 5-8 years
* Life span in captivity is 15+ years
* They do have a light venom.
* They are found mostly in desserts and grasslands close to a small body of water.
* They will bite if provoked but their number one defense is musking a predator They release a fowl smell onto the animal.

**Defense Mechanisms:**

* **Striking**
* **Musking**

**Reproduction:**

* Females are ovovaviporous meaning they lay their eggs internally and the young are born via live birth after.
* They can have up to 20 young in one birth. The snakelets are only about 2 inches in length when they are born.

**Handling Tips:**

The Checkered Garter snake is less than a year old and is extremely docile and easy to handle.