

MEDIA RELEASE

Issued: Monday 21 October 2019

Snake season advice as serpents seek sunshine

Snake season is upon us, and experts say residents should take certain precautions as the reptiles seek out sunshine as the weather improves and temperatures start to rise.

Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery Natural Sciences Collection Officer and Herpetologist Simon Fearn says snake species such as Copperheads and Tigers are emerging from their winter slumber in search of warmth and a snack.

Mr Fearn says while snakes are quite happy in their own company and traditionally avoid contact with humans as much as possible, residents should always be mindful of the reptiles when embarking on walks through the city's reserves, on bush tracks and in tall grass.

"Snakes are quite sluggish this early in the season and may be slow to slither out of your way, so give them space."

"Don't interfere with snakes. Most Tasmanian snake bites are a result of untrained people harassing or trying to handle them."

Climate change may be lengthening the activity period of snakes, which typically stretches from September until the end of March, depending on conditions.

Mr Fearn says changing weather patterns in some parts of Tasmania are also expected to affect certain species of snakes.

"Reduced rainfall in Eastern Tasmania is impacting frog numbers, a staple of a Copperhead's diet."

The QVMAG Natural Sciences team is actively conducting fieldwork to investigate snake behaviour and how a changing climate might impact on local fauna.

For lots more interesting information about snakes, check out the QVMAG-published book, *The Snakes of Tasmania*, available at the Museum's Shops.

You're invited to chat to Simon and meet his pet Copperhead on the lawns of the Queen Victoria Art Gallery [today at 11am](#).