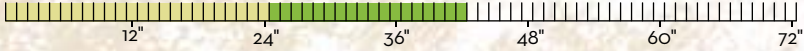
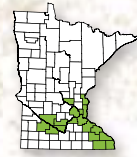


NORTHERN WATERSNAKE

(*Nerodia sipedon*)



Status:	Not listed
Size:	24 - 42 inches
Active season:	Late April through early October
Scales:	Keeled, divided anal plate
Description:	This heavy-bodied, aquatic snake has a base color of reddish brown to gray or tan, and is marked with dark blotches (may appear like bands around the snake. These blotches can be faded in older snakes, making the snake appear solid brown or black in color. The belly is cream or white with distinct irregularly spaced, reddish half-moons and gray speckling. Juveniles are similar to adults except their blotches are more pronounced in color.
Diet:	Fish, amphibians, crayfish, and insects
Habitat:	Occurs in or around water including ponds, lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands. Much time is spent basking on shore or on branches overhanging water. They overwinter below the frost line in upland rock crevices and holes away from water, but crayfish burrows, muskrat and beaver dams, and levees may also be used.
Hunting:	Active forager
Reproduction:	Livebearer, litter size is 6 - 99 young, with an average of 27.
Other name(s):	None known
Notes:	This is Minnesota's only water snake. This species is quick to defend itself if cornered. Water Moccasins (Cottonmouths) and Copperheads do not occur in Minnesota.



MNDNR-Erica Hoglund

Northern Watersnake.



Barney Oldfield

Northern Watersnake.

Source: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. 2010. [Snakes and Lizards of Minnesota](#). Nongame Wildlife Program, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, St. Paul, Minnesota. 67 pp.