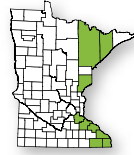


# RING-NECKED SNAKE

(*Diadophis punctatus*)



- Status:** Not listed
- Size:** 10 – 15 inches
- Active season:** April through October
- Scales:** Unkeeled, divided anal plate
- Description:** Solid shiny bluish black to gray on its back, with a bright yellow-orange ring around its neck. Belly is yellow to orange, often with bright red on the underside of its tail. Black spots are scattered across the snake's belly. Ring-necked snakes in northern MN have few to no black spots on the belly
- Diet:** Insects, earthworms, slugs, small salamanders, frogs and other snakes
- Habitat:** Often found on south to west-facing hillsides and bluffs in southeastern MN, and under rocks, logs, or bark in damp deciduous forests in northern MN. These snakes are quite secretive, spending much of their time under flat rocks and in crevices. They prefer areas with abundant ground cover. They overwinter in rock crevices or animal burrows that go below the frost line.
- Hunting:** Active forager at night, uses scent
- Reproduction:** Egg layer, clutch size is 1 – 10 eggs, with an average of 5
- Other name(s):** Corkscrew Snake. This nickname was earned because of one of the snake's defensive behaviors; it rolls its tail into a tight coil to show its bright underside in a flashy display.
- Notes:** Minnesota has two subspecies of Ring-necked Snakes. The Prairie Ring-necked (*Diadophis punctatus arnyi*) occurs in southeastern MN, whereas the Northern Ring-necked (*D. p. edwardsii*) is found in Pine County and north.



Barney Oldfield

Ring-necked Snake.



MNDNR-Kelly Lynch Pharis

Ring-necked Snake demonstrating its defensive "corkscrew" behavior.



MNDNR-Kelly Lynch Pharis

Ring-necked Snake.

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.