



MEDIA *release*

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SNAKE CHARMERS TO GRADUATE WITH FLYING COLOURS

Rangers from Parks, Conservation will complete an annual snake handling training tomorrow gaining a new found respect for the eight species of snakes that reside in the ACT.

“We are privileged to share our home with these beautiful and amazing creatures,” said Manager of Canberra Nature Park North, Daniel Iglesias.

“Snakes have had to deal with a much maligned reputation, but the truth is, they are an important component of our local environment and are amongst our most misunderstood native animals.

“Contrary to popular belief, snakes are not fearsome and aggressive creatures who attack without provocation. In reality snakes are much more fearful of people than we are of them.

“Most Canberrans are aware that at this time of the year, snakes are out and about going about their business. Eastern brown snakes and red-bellied black snakes are the most common snakes around the ACT and the most likely species to cross paths with humans.

“Should a snake enter your garden it will only be passing through. They do not take up residence in suburban yards because of the lack of suitable food and shelter.

“The simple message is if you see a snake, leave it alone. Don’t attempt to catch or kill it, as harassing the snake may cause it to try to defend itself by striking at the source of provocation.

“A very small number of snakes get themselves into trouble when they venture into the urban environment and it is on these occasions that our staff will respond to help the snake (and the human).

“In the past Rangers have been called upon to free snakes tangled in bird netting, trapped in buildings and in all sorts of backyard situations, even from a coca-cola can,” said Mr Iglesias.

The training is an annual program undertaken by Rangers and equips them with the latest in snake species’ life history, snake bite first aid and handling techniques.

What: Photo Opportunity: Snake handling in action

Where: Mitchell Depot, 66-68 Grimwade Street Mitchell

When: 11 am Wednesday 6 December 2005

Further information: Marg Wade, telephone 62072203