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Snake Rattle©

Have you ever heard that snakes are more scared of us than we are of them? Well it's true! Rattlesnakes, a breed of reptile found in the southwestern United States, have a maraca in their tail. Let's learn why they developed this adaptation!

Supplies:

- Cardboard tube (toilet paper roll)
- 4" x 4" square of heavy-duty aluminum foil
- 2 x Rubber band
- Dry rice or birdseed

Instructions:

1. Place one of the aluminum foil sheets on one opening of the cardboard tube. Secure this sheet in place using a rubber band.
2. Pour your rice or birdseed into the open end of the toilet paper tube.
3. Secure the second sheet of foil on the open end of the tube.
4. Give your rattle a test shake. Does it sound like a rattle snake?
5. Now we are going to play hide and seek as snakes!
6. Snakes like to hide in plain sight and blend in with the ground. So, find a spot to sit on the ground.
7. When someone comes close to you, shake your rattle to warn them to get away!

The Science Behind It:

Most people are really scared of snakes because snakes have a bad reputation for being mean and scary. Actually, snakes are usually calm nice animals that do a lot of important things in nature. Some snakes are venomous but not very many and the ones that are use their venom to kill their food. Do you think a little old snake could eat a person? No way, so they don't want to waste their venom on something they can't eat.

Who likes having mice or rats in their house? Most people do not like them, but snakes eat rats and mice to survive so if you have snakes around, they will keep the number of mice or rats down in your house. If it were not for snakes, we would be overrun with mice and rats and that would not be good at all.



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A snake is a type of **reptile**. Reptiles are a type of animal that is cold-blooded. Does that mean that they need to wear a sweatshirt all the time? No, that means that they do not have the ability to keep themselves warm, so they must rely on the sun to keep them warm. Cold-blooded animals rely on the environment to keep warm. Because of this, you will rarely find a snake in a cold place.

Does anyone know how to tell a **venomous** snake from a **non-venomous** snake? This is important to know in case you come across one. Venomous snakes have a triangle shaped head because their venom is kept in little sacks in their cheeks and non-venomous snakes have an oval shaped head. This is important because some non-venomous snakes like to pretend to be venomous snakes so that other animals will not try to eat them. If you see a snake though you should avoid it and give it space no matter what type!

Can you name a type of venomous snake? The most common type of venomous snake is the **rattle snake** with fifty different kinds around the world. It is called a rattle snake because it has a rattle on the end of its tail that it uses to warn other animals that might eat or hurt the snake. It does not mean that it wants to bite you; it just doesn't want to get hurt. If someone were about to step on you what would you do?

The rattle is a warning that the snake uses to make sure it is not stepped on. Snakes are particularly good at blending in and using camouflage.



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Snake Rattle Images

