



Imagine a long, sleek creature, gliding silently through the grass - it's not a movie monster, it's a black rat snake! These snakes are quite amazing to look at, with their shiny black scales and light-colored bellies. They can grow up to 8 feet long, which makes them the longest snake in North America. And don't worry, they're not dangerous; they are non-venomous, which means their bite won't hurt you.

Speaking of bites, let's dive into what black rat snakes like to eat. These reptiles are carnivores, which mean they love to eat meat, especially small rodents like mice and rats. They are very good for farms because they keep the rodent population down. But that's not all they eat, they also like birds and their eggs, frogs, and even other snakes.

Now that you know what they eat, let's explore where these slithering creatures live. Black rat snakes are found in the eastern and central United States, from New England to Florida and as far west as Texas. They like wooded areas, fields, and farmland, and are good climbers, so you might even find them up a tree. When it gets too cold, they hibernate in dens, often with other snakes.



Just like us, black rat snakes go through different stages in their life. In the spring, female snakes lay 10 to 20 eggs in a hidden nest, and after about two months, the baby snakes hatch. These baby snakes have to take care of themselves right away, but they grow quickly and can live up to 30 years in the wild. So, you see, black rat snakes are fascinating creatures, not to be feared, but to be respected and appreciated.





**Solve each problem.**

**Use the article to answer the question.**

- 1) Why are black rat snakes good for farms?
  - A. Because they scare away other pests
  - B. Because they keep the rodent population down
  - C. Because they are symbolic of good luck
  - D. Because they help pollinate plants
- 2) How many eggs does a female black rat snake lay in a nest?
  - A. 1 to 5 eggs
  - B. 10 to 20 eggs
  - C. 100 to 120 eggs
  - D. 30 to 40 eggs
- 3) When do female black rat snakes lay their eggs?
  - A. In the summer
  - B. In the fall
  - C. In the winter
  - D. In the spring
- 4) How long can black rat snakes live in the wild?
  - A. Up to 20 years
  - B. Up to 10 years
  - C. Up to 30 years
  - D. Up to 40 years
- 5) Are black rat snakes venomous?
  - A. Yes, they are venomous
  - B. Only adult snakes are venomous
  - C. Only baby snakes are venomous
  - D. No, they are non-venomous
- 6) Where can black rat snakes be found?
  - A. Western United States
  - B. Eastern and central United States
  - C. Africa
  - D. South America
- 7) How long does it take for black rat snake eggs to hatch?
  - A. One year
  - B. Six months
  - C. One week
  - D. About two months
- 8) How long can a black rat snake grow?
  - A. Up to 8 feet
  - B. Up to 15 feet
  - C. Up to 10 feet
  - D. Up to 3 feet
- 9) What do black rat snakes do when it gets too cold?
  - A. They hibernate in dens
  - B. They migrate to warmer regions
  - C. They stay active and seek warm places
  - D. They burrow into the ground
- 10) What do black rat snakes like to eat?
  - A. Small rodents like mice and rats
  - B. They are herbivores, they only eat plants
  - C. Only birds and their eggs
  - D. Only other snakes



11) What color are black rat snakes?

- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| A. Red   | B. Blue  |
| C. Green | D. Black |

**Determine if the statements is something the animal would say (W) or it it is not something the animal would say (N).**

- 12) "Height frightens me, you would never catch me climbing trees."
- 13) "We're the tiniest snakes you could find, rarely growing over a foot."
- 14) "I like places with trees and fields for climbing. Sometimes, you might even find me up a tree!"
- 15) "My lunch menu isn't just limited to rodents, I also snack on birds, their eggs, frogs, and even other snakes."
- 16) "Our bite is really dangerous and can harm humans seriously."
- 17) "When it gets cold, I don't hibernate. Instead I'll migrate south to warmer places."
- 18) "In the wild, I can live up to 30 years!"
- 19) "We're total vegans and love munching on leaves and fruits."
- 20) "You might not believe it, but we are capable of jumping from tree to tree like squirrels! Climbing isn't our only talent."
- 21) "You can find us in every corner of the world - from the freezing poles to the scorching equator!"
- 22) "Oh, you heard it right! We black rat snakes have a lifespan of a 100 years in the wild - longer than most humans!"
- 23) "I'm non-venomous, so my bite won't hurt you."
- 24) "Yes, we can grow up to a whopping 20 feet long! That makes us the longest creatures on Earth!"
- 25) "Our eggs take almost a year to hatch."
- 26) "Not all snakes like to live alone, I often share my den or hibernation spot with other snakes."

**Determine if the statement is a fact or opinion based on the information in the article.**

- 27) Areas where black rat snakes are often found include woodlands, fields, and farmlands.
- 28) Black rat snakes are the most interesting snakes because they are non-venomous.
- 29) The habitat of black rat snakes is mainly in the eastern and central parts of the United States.
- 30) It's surprising that black rat snakes will share a den with other snakes when hibernating.
- 31) Black rat snakes are not venomous.
- 32) Black rat snakes have the most interesting pattern of shiny black scales and a light-colored belly.
- 33) Black rat snakes can live up to 30 years in the wild.
- 34) The primary diet of black rat snakes consists of small rodents like mice and rats.
- 35) The fact that black rat snakes will eat other snakes is disgusting.



- 36) It's really cool that black rat snakes can grow up to 8 feet long.

**Determine if the statement is true or false.**

- 37) Black rat snakes live in the eastern and central United States.
- 38) Black rat snakes only live for 2 years in the wild.
- 39) Black rat snakes can be found in trees.
- 40) Black rat snakes are highly venomous snakes.
- 41) Black rat snakes are carnivores.
- 42) Black rat snakes only live in New England.
- 43) Black rat snakes only eat vegetables and fruits.
- 44) Black rat snakes are the shortest snake in North America.
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- 46) Black rat snakes are non-venomous.

**Determine if the sentence is a declarative(d), exclamatory(e), interrogative(i) or imperative(m).**

- 47) Black rat snakes are constrictors, meaning they squeeze their prey to death.
- 48) What can we do to help protect black rat snakes?
- 49) Black rat snakes are native to North America.
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- 51) How do black rat snakes defend themselves?
- 52) Are black rat snakes dangerous?



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- |                  |                          |                          |
|------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. <u>B</u>      | 26. <u>true</u>          | 51. <u>interrogative</u> |
| 2. <u>B</u>      | 27. <u>fact</u>          | 52. <u>interrogative</u> |
| 3. <u>D</u>      | 28. <u>opinion</u>       |                          |
| 4. <u>C</u>      | 29. <u>fact</u>          |                          |
| 5. <u>D</u>      | 30. <u>opinion</u>       |                          |
| 6. <u>B</u>      | 31. <u>fact</u>          |                          |
| 7. <u>D</u>      | 32. <u>opinion</u>       |                          |
| 8. <u>A</u>      | 33. <u>fact</u>          |                          |
| 9. <u>A</u>      | 34. <u>fact</u>          |                          |
| 10. <u>A</u>     | 35. <u>opinion</u>       |                          |
| 11. <u>D</u>     | 36. <u>opinion</u>       |                          |
| 12. <u>false</u> | 37. <u>true</u>          |                          |
| 13. <u>false</u> | 38. <u>false</u>         |                          |
| 14. <u>true</u>  | 39. <u>true</u>          |                          |
| 15. <u>true</u>  | 40. <u>false</u>         |                          |
| 16. <u>false</u> | 41. <u>true</u>          |                          |
| 17. <u>false</u> | 42. <u>false</u>         |                          |
| 18. <u>true</u>  | 43. <u>false</u>         |                          |
| 19. <u>false</u> | 44. <u>false</u>         |                          |
| 20. <u>false</u> | 45. <u>true</u>          |                          |
| 21. <u>false</u> | 46. <u>true</u>          |                          |
| 22. <u>false</u> | 47. <u>declarative</u>   |                          |
| 23. <u>true</u>  | 48. <u>interrogative</u> |                          |
| 24. <u>false</u> | 49. <u>declarative</u>   |                          |
| 25. <u>false</u> | 50. <u>declarative</u>   |                          |



**Solve each problem.**

**Use the article to answer the question.**

- 1) Why are black rat snakes good for farms? (paragraph 2)
  - A. Because they scare away other pests
  - B. Because they keep the rodent population down
  - C.
  - D.
- 2) How many eggs does a female black rat snake lay in a nest? (paragraph 4)
  - A. 1 to 5 eggs
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  - A. Small rodents like mice and rats
  - B.
  - C.
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- 11) What color are black rat snakes? (paragraph 1)
  - A.
  - B. Blue
  - C.
  - D. Black



Determine if the statements is something the animal would say (W) or it is not something the animal would say (N).

12) "Height frightens me, you would never catch me climbing trees." (paragraph 3)