



WESTERN DIAMONDBACK RATTLESNAKE



by Craig Boutland



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by Craig Boutland

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Minneapolis, Minnesota

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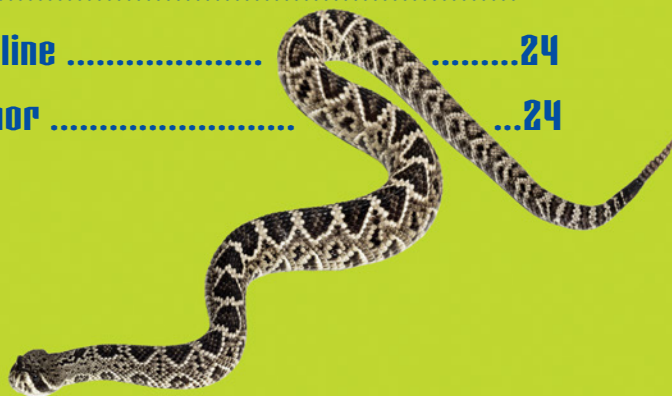
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Rattlesnake Warning

It's a quiet day in the desert for a western diamondback rattlesnake. Suddenly, there is the crunch of footsteps. Humans are walking toward the snake's hiding spot. *Rattle-rattle-rattle.* The diamondback shakes its tail, warning the hikers to stay away!

Luckily for the hikers, these snakes are more likely to hide or to slither away than to attack. Listening to the snakes' warning sound keeps everybody safe.



A close-up photograph of a Western diamondback rattlesnake coiled on a surface of dark gravel and small stones. The snake's head is on the right, with its mouth wide open, revealing a pink interior and sharp fangs. Its body is covered in brown and tan diamond-shaped scales. The tail, visible in the upper left, has a segmented, rattle-like structure. A yellow circular callout with a blue border is positioned in the upper right corner, containing text about the snake.

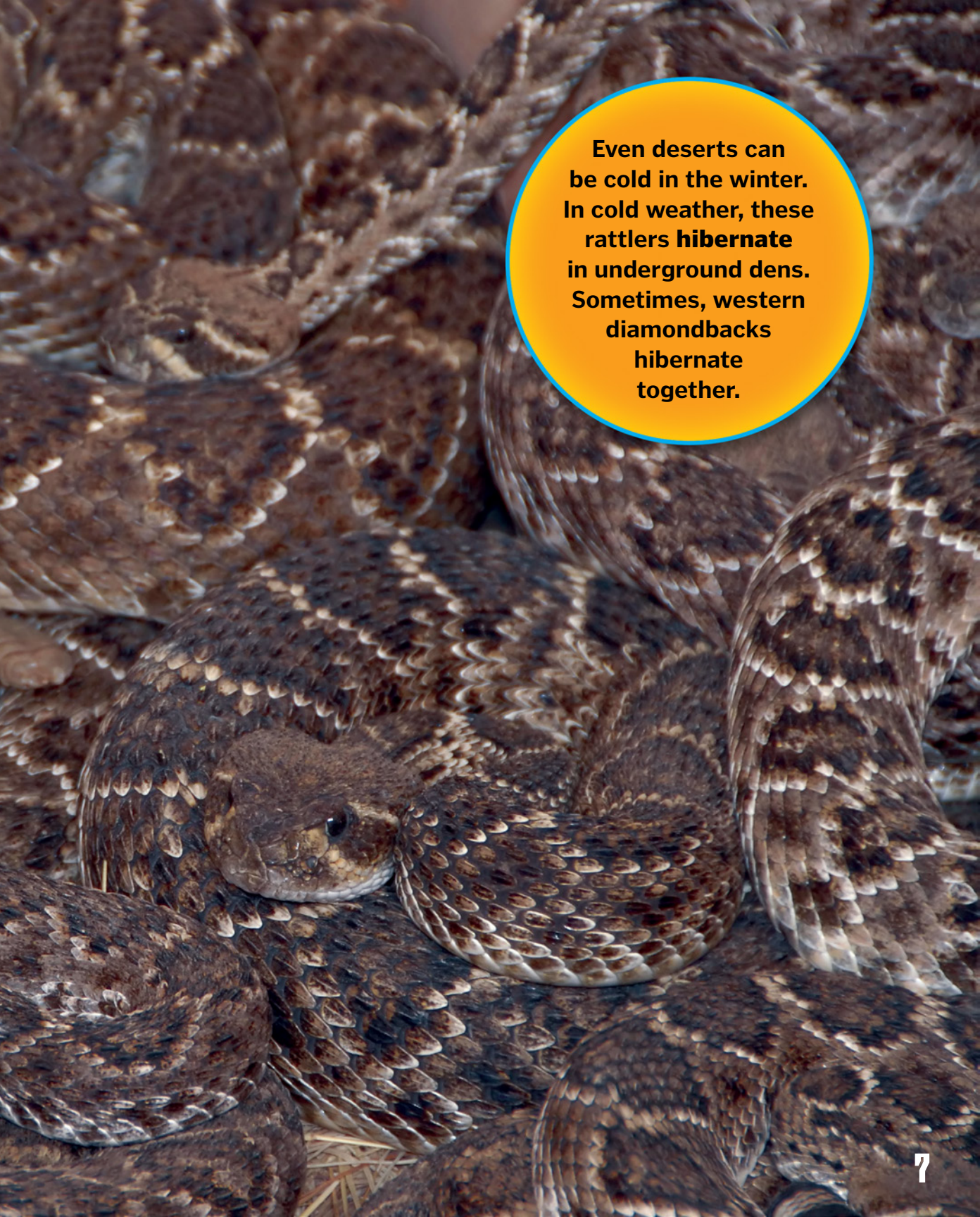
**Western
diamondbacks are a
type of rattlesnake.
All rattlesnakes are
venomous.**

A Hot, Dry Home

Western diamondback rattlesnakes live in the southwestern United States and northern Mexico. They prefer a dry **habitat** and often live in deserts. But these rattlers can also make a home in scrublands, grasslands, and on rocky hillsides.

Because of their hot habitats, these snakes are **nocturnal**. During the day, they escape the heat by coiling up in the shade or in an empty animal **burrow**. Then at night, the snakes come out.





Even deserts can
be cold in the winter.
In cold weather, these
rattlers **hibernate**
in underground dens.
Sometimes, western
diamondbacks
hibernate
together.