



# SIDEWINDER



by Craig Boutland



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**by Craig Boutland**

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Minneapolis, Minnesota

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## *Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Names: Boutland, Craig, author.

Title: Sidewinder / Craig Boutland.

Description: Minneapolis, Minnesota : Bearport Publishing Company, [2021] |

Series: Slither! | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020008975 (print) | LCCN 2020008976 (ebook) | ISBN 9781647470999 (library binding) | ISBN 9781647471088 (paperback) | ISBN 9781647471170 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Sidewinder (Reptile)—Juvenile literature.

Classification: LCC QL666.O69 B66 2021 (print) | LCC QL666.O69 (ebook) | DDC 597.96—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020008975>

LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020008976>

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For more information, write to Bearport Publishing, 5357 Penn Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55419. Printed in the United States of America.

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# Death Valley

Hikers walk across the fiery hot sands of Death Valley. They are in one of the hottest places on Earth, and there are no signs of life. Suddenly, a snake darts out from the sand just ahead. It moves away quickly, leaving a trail of wavy lines in the sand. The hikers almost stepped on a sidewinder. They were lucky to miss the rattlesnake this time. The sidewinder's bite is very painful.



Death Valley



A sidewinder rattlesnake is shown on a sandy surface. The snake's body is coiled in an S-shape, with its head raised and facing towards the right. The snake's scales are a mix of light tan and brown, with darker spots and bands. The tail is visible on the left side of the frame, showing a distinct black and white pattern. A yellow circular callout with a blue border is positioned in the upper right area of the image.

**Sidewinders  
are a type of  
rattlesnake. Like all  
rattlesnakes, they  
have rattles at  
the ends of  
their tails.**



# A Snake With Horns


Sidewinders are small, slim snakes that grow up to 2 feet (0.6 m) long. Their bodies are yellow or light brown with dark spots. These colors and patterns help the snakes blend in with their desert **habitat** in the sandy southwestern United States. Horn-shaped **scales** bulge out above the snake's eyes. These horns protect the eyes from the hot sun and sand.



## Where sidewinders live

Sidewinders can be found in the southwestern United States and parts of northwestern Mexico.





**Sidewinders are sometimes called horned rattlesnakes or sidewinder rattlesnakes.**