

The Dice Snake

Check out the dice snake.

By Mark O'Shea

Distribution: Balkans and eastern Europe to central Asia.

Habitat: Most habitats, excluding dense woodland or desert, even in mountain streams.

Diet: Fish, occasionally amphibians.

Max. length: 500-800mm SVL (700-1000mm TL).

Reproductive strategy: Oviparous with clutches of 5-25 eggs.

The dice snake is distributed widely in eastern Europe and western Asia, though not as widely as the grass snake. Only one subspecies, *N.t.heinrothi*, is recognized, from the island of Serpilor (Osrov Zminy) in the Black Sea. Dice snakes are more aquatic even than viperine watersnakes and of a more slender build. They have a chequered pattern which earns them their two common names.

Sources for more information:

Arnold E.N. & J.A. Burton 1978, *A Field Guide to the Reptiles and Amphibians of Britain and Europe*. Collins. 272pp.

Steward J.W. 1971, *The Snakes of Europe*. David & Charles. 238pp.

Street D. 1979, *Reptiles of Northern and Central Europe*. Batsford. xi+268pp