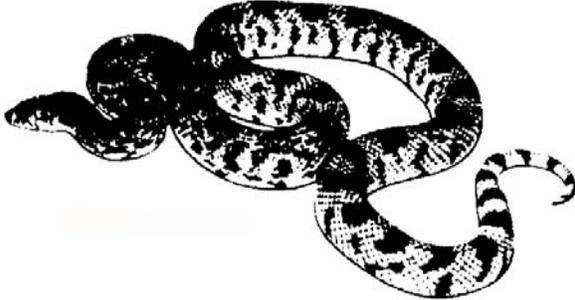


Louisiana pine snake

(*Pituophis ruthveni*)

Documented in the following Texas counties:



Angelina
Cherokee
Hardin
Houston
Jasper
Montgomery
Nacogdoches
Newton
Polk
Sabine
Trinity
Tyler
Walker
Wood

Designated as a candidate species, this 3-5 feet long terrestrial snake inhabits the sandy, hardwood-conifer ecosystem of west-central Louisiana and eastern Texas. It utilizes small-mammal or tortoise burrows for shelter, and is thought to feed primarily on fossorial rodents such as pocket gophers.

Approximately 40 chocolate to brown colored blotches are found along the back of this white to tannish serpent. The anal plate is undivided, the scales are keeled, and the belly is white or pale yellow. This species is known to hiss loudly and raise its head off the ground in a "bluff" response; however, individuals normally do not bite even when agitated.



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