

Pit viper

Prohibited invasive animal

Look. Report. Protect. 13 25 23



- It is illegal to import, keep, breed or sell pit vipers in Queensland.
- Venomous and a potential danger to people.
- Competes and preys on native species and small pets.
- Can spread diseases, bacteria and parasites.
- Early detection and reporting helps protect Queensland's natural environment.

Description

Pit vipers (*Subfamily crotalinae*) are generally short and stout ranging in lengths from 90–150 cm. An exception is the bushmaster (*Lachesis muta*) which can grow in excess of 2 m. Colours range from vibrant greens and yellows with arboreal species through to darker colours with terrestrial species. Colour variations can occur within species and include markings which may be present in darker coloured blotches or bands.

Biosecurity risk

Pit vipers are a prohibited invasive animal under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. Prohibited species must be reported immediately to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23. You cannot keep a pit viper as a pet in Queensland. Penalties may apply.

Pit vipers are venomous to highly venomous and extreme caution must be exercised as they may strike and envenomate if disturbed or stressed. Species from the Crotalinae subfamily can strike at a very fast speed. If required, antivenin for the treatment of a snake bite from non-native species may be difficult or unable to be sourced in Australia.

Pit vipers can threaten native species, through competition for food resources and direct predation. Pit vipers can also prey upon small pets. They can also spread diseases, bacteria and parasites to native species.

What should I do?

If you think you have seen a pit viper, report it immediately to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 or scan the QR code to access our reporting web page. Until an authorised officer contacts you, please take reasonable and practical steps to prevent the pit viper from escaping, such as shutting doors or windows to contain the animal but only if safe to do so. Do not handle if not a trained or professional snake-catcher.

More information

Contact Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 or visit biosecurity.qld.gov.au.

