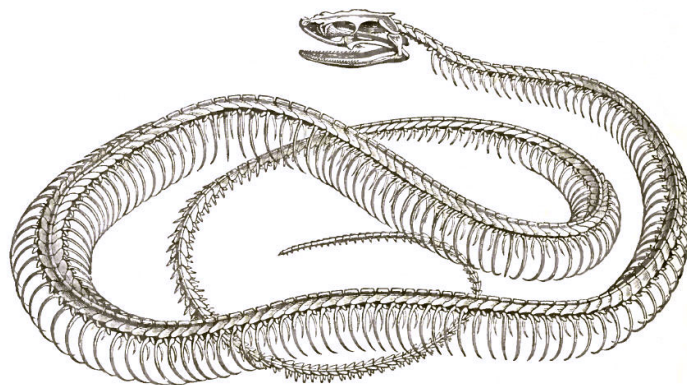


How Snakes Avoid Us – a Quick Demo

Snakes are shy! They want nothing to do with people. If they sense that people are coming, they get out of there fast! (This especially applies to rattlesnakes, maybe the shyest snakes of all.)

Snakes have no external ears, so they can't hear us. They are usually low in grasses or rocks, so can't see much of what is coming. So how do they know when we are approaching? Through vibrations! Snakes have many more ribs than we have, and they are usually stretched along the ground (sensitive jaw bones are on the ground, too). When a snake senses the vibrations of our feet approaching, it's, "See ya later!"

You can demonstrate this by having kids sit at a solid table—no separate boards or slats—with the palms of their hands flat against the surface, and eyes closed. You will, with closed fists, gently and quietly pound on the table, so that you can't be heard. But ask the kids if they can feel you pound on the table, and of course they can; they have felt the vibrations through their hands. Usually a big AHA! moment!



Of course there are times when we do cross paths with, or get near, snakes. They may have been basking or sleeping or maybe just feeling confident! You can talk to the students about what to do when they DO encounter a snake.