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Carolina's 38 native snake species are listed as either endangered, threatened or of special concern. If you come across a snake, remain calm and give it plenty of room to move along. If it's believed to be a rattlesnake or Northern pine snake, please report it through the HerpMapper.org mobile app, or by email with a photo (if safely possible), location (GPS coordinates preferred) and date and time observed to rattlesnake@ncwildlife.gov or through NCWRC pine snake reporting tool.

• **Coyote** sightings spike in the spring during the breeding season and peak in May as they search for food to support their pups. While they rarely attack people, they are opportunistic hunters, so smaller pets should be closely supervised when outdoors to avoid being preyed upon. Tips to protect pets include:

- Remove all outdoor pet food, fallen fruit, food waste and bird feeders.
- Keep cats and dogs on a leash or harness whenever they're outside.
- Haze coyotes away (yelling, spray with water hose, throw a ball) from homes and businesses to keep them wary of humans.
- Install fencing which is at least 6 feet tall and prevents digging underneath.

Coyotes build dens in brushy or wooded areas to protect their pups when they are very young. If a coyote is staring or starts following you, her den may be nearby, so calmly leave the area and inform others to avoid the area for a few weeks. As soon as the pups can survive outside of the den, the coyotes will no longer use the shelter.

• **Foxes** give birth between late February and April. The pups (or "kits") start exploring outside their den by late spring and early summer. Foxes are nocturnal, but it is not uncommon to see them during the day. They are shy and usually are not aggressive, unless people have been feeding them. Their appetite for mice and rats, and the occasional groundhog is of great benefit to most homeowners and farmers. Similar to coyotes, foxes are opportunistic and will take advantage of pet food left outside, garbage and small prey that is attracted to bird feeders, (i.e., squirrels, birds). They are well adapted to living around people and thrive in neighborhoods. It is illegal to relocate foxes or any possible rabies vector species (such as raccoons and skunks) in North Carolina, in order to prevent unintentional spread of disease to both people and other wildlife. Removing these species from your property requires euthanizing the animal and either a license or permit.

If a fox may be trying to den near your home (under decks, raised porches and crawl spaces) consider these options to deter it:

- Place a spotlight or strobe light on the ground, pointed toward the den entrance.
- Play talk radio next to the den at high volume or frequently make loud noises in the immediate area.

- Install a motion-activated sprinkler near the den entrance or throw small objects in the adult foxes' direction to assert that their presence won't be tolerated.

• **Rabbits** give birth around this time of year. Many people see newborn rabbits (kits) in plain sight, or in shallow holes tucked among clumps of thick grass, under shrubs, or in the middle of open lawns. Rabbit nests often resemble a small patch of dead grass. Female rabbits (called "does") actively avoid their nests and visit only once or twice per day for a few minutes to avoid attracting predators. If a young rabbit is outside its nest and appears to be healthy and unharmed, leave it alone. The mother will usually return after humans leave the area. If it is believed the animal needs help, leave it alone and call either the Wildlife Helpline or a legal, licensed wildlife rehabilitator (ncwrc.maps.wildlife.rehabilitator) for advice.

• **Deer fawns** are born closer to late spring and early summer. They are born with spots and very little scent for protection. Does intentionally stay away for periods of time during the day to decrease the chance of predators finding the fawn. Therefore, it is advised not to move a fawn. A doe will usually look for a missing fawn for about 48 hours. After that time, or if it is bleating loudly, appears thin or injured, or has visible diarrhea, it is advised to contact a licensed fawn rehabilitator (ncwrc.maps.wildlife.rehabilitator) for advice or contact NCWRC's Wildlife Helpline at 866-318-2401. NOTE: All fawn rehabilitation within primary and secondary Chronic Wasting Disease surveillance areas is prohibited and fawns may not be transported out of surveillance areas in order to prevent unintentional spread of CWD.

• **Songbird chicks** will hatch throughout the spring and early summer. Knowing the difference between a nestling and a fledgling bird can help determine if a young bird found on the ground needs assistance. Nestlings do not have feathers yet and cannot survive outside of their nest for long. Return nestlings to the nest as quickly as possible, and if the entire nest has fallen, place it back in the tree or construct a makeshift nest. Fledglings have their feathers and are able to walk, hop or fly short distances. They may appear helpless, but in fact have left the nest and are learning to fly. Fledglings should be left alone unless they are obviously injured or in immediate danger. In those less common cases, contact a licensed rehabilitator. Keeping cats inside and dogs on leashes also help these young birds make it through this vulnerable learning stage.

• **Hellbenders and Mudpuppies** are seen more frequently in early spring, mainly due to more people venturing into their habitats, specifically anglers, as hatchery supported trout waters open each year on the first Saturday in April. Neither the mudpuppy nor the hellbender is poisonous, venomous, toxic or harmful to humans, although they may try to bite if someone tries to pick them up. If sighted, they should be left alone. Both species are listed as a North Carolina wildlife of special concern, and NCWRC requests reporting sightings to Lori.Williams@ncwildlife.gov and including physical location (GPS coordinates preferred) and a photo or video, or contacting NC Wildlife Helpline, 866-318-2401 and providing details of the observation.

NOTE: It is a Class 1 misdemeanor with a fine and up to 120 days in jail to take, possess, transport or sell mudpuppy or hellbenders. If anglers happen to catch one by hook and line, they should carefully remove the hook if possible or cut the line close to the hook and return the salamander back to the water. Learn more by visiting the N.C. Partners in Amphibians and Reptile Conservation's mudpuppy webpage, ncwildlife.org/mudpuppy and the NCWRC's hellbender webpage, ncwildlife.org/hellbender.

Some basic rules that apply to all wildlife encounters include:

- Never feed or handle a wild animal.
- Leave a young animal where it's found because wild parents rarely abandon their young, even if they detect human scent.
- If unsure as to whether an animal needs human assistance or to answer questions about wildlife removal:

Contact NCWRC's Wildlife Helpline, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., at 866-318-2401 or by email, HWI@ncwildlife.gov.

You can visit the agency's frequently asked questions

or contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator (ncwrc.maps.wildlife.rehabilitator) or wildlife control agent at ncwildlife.gov/connect/have-wildlife-problem.

Burnsville Community Quarterly Red Cross Blood Drive

Burnsville RLC/ Burnsville Fire Dept. and others

It is time to once again help save a life. The Red Cross Blood Drive is at hand. On Friday, April 4 there will be a Blood Drive at the Burnsville Fire & Rescue Department, from 2:00 until 6:00 p.m. Each previous drive has been successful because of a community of donors caring for others. Each Blood Drive has been successful because you care. If you cannot give, please tell someone or bring someone.

Will you please come and help us to reach our goal? We cannot reach our goal of 30 donors without you. We can't be a part of the solution without you. You may go online and register with the Red Cross now at redcross.org. That will save you time and most of all save lives.

BRLC is located at 13349 Highway 742 North in Burnsville, across from the Fire Department. For more information you can call 704-826-8737, check their Facebook page, email burnsvillemc@gmail.com, or visit www.burnsvillemc.org.

Pinwheels for Prevention Planting Event

On Monday, April 7 Anson County Partnership for Children is partnering with Anson County Government, Department of Social Services, Anson County Domestic Violence Coalition, and Prevent Child Abuse- America to host a Pinwheels for Prevention planting at 12 noon at Anson County Courthouse. This event is held in recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month. More info at 704-694-4036.

Anson Mobile Food Market is March 20

The next Anson Mobile Food Market will be held this Thursday, March 20, starting at 10:00 a.m. at the Town of Ansonville City Hall, 8778 Highway 52.

Food will be given away, including fresh vegetables, fruit and bread (if available). There will be blood pressure and blood sugar checks, along with other healthy living topics and booths.

This free event offers citizens of Anson County six to eight different types of fresh produce monthly. This is a free initiative, so please come and get some produce.

Nothing is required for you to receive produce, just come.

The event is sponsored by the Anson County Extension and its partners.

This event is to assist in the scarcity of fresh, healthy food in the county. It will also serve as an educational event to offer education on the two targeted areas of the county health assessment which are tobacco use and hypertension. Agencies will be set up offering services and information in those two targeted areas.

The Health Department Offers Sick Visit Appointments

Did you know that the Anson County Health Department offers sick visit appointments for those over 21 for the following: cold; flu; sore throat; seasonal allergies; urinary tract infections (UTI); earache; upset stomach; acute bronchitis; pink eye; minor abrasions, burns & bruises; sunburn; insect bites & stings; suture removal; and blood pressure check (nurse).

Some same day appointments are available.

Primary health insurance is accepted as in-network is BCBS, Cigna, United Healthcare, Medco, Aetna, Multiplan, Ambetter, Medicare, Wellcare Medicare, Amerihealth Next, NC Medicaid, NC Medicaid Prepaid Health Plans (Healthy Blue, Amerihealth Caritas, Wellcare-Medicaid, Carolinas Complete Health, United Healthcare Medicaid).

Affordable options are available for those who do not have insurance, or do not have one of the primary plans listed above.

To make an appointment or learn more call 704-694-5188.

Funny, Random & Weird Holidays

- Mar 20 Thursday - Absolutely Incredible Kid Day
- Mar 20 Thursday - World Storytelling Day
- Mar 20 Thursday - Proposal Day
- Mar 21 Friday - Common Courtesy Day

- Mar 22 Saturday - International Goof Off Day
- Mar 23 Sunday - Puppy Day
- Mar 23 Sunday - Near Miss Day
- Mar 24 Monday - Chocolate Covered Raisins Day
- Mar 25 Tuesday - Talkie Reading Day
- Mar 25 Tuesday - Tolkien Reading Day
- Mar 26 Wednesday - Make Up Your Own Holiday Day

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