## **SOME SNAKES CAN DISAPPEAR**

Snakes are great hunters, but they often become prey themselves. Birds, raccoons, foxes and other animals have a taste for snakes. And one way to hide is camouflage. Many snakes sport colours and patterns that allow them to blend in with their surroundings. For instance, a green tree python looks like a vine when it coils itself around a branch. A vellow eyelash viper blends in with flowers. And a rainbow boa disappears in leaves or tree stumps!

Ireland has NO native

KNOW...

snake species. The only other places without snakes are New Zealand, Iceland, Greenland and Antarctica!



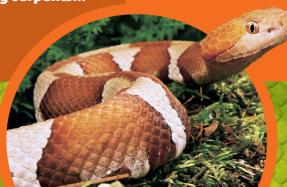
# CAN BE GOOD FOR YOU!

**Snake bites can sometimes** be deadly. But scientists have discovered that these very same poisons can also be used to make medicines! Check out these seven healing serpents...

## **COPPERHEAD**

These poisonous snakes from North America climb trees to hunt for large insects called cicadas.

VENOM USED TO TREAT **Breast cancer** 



#### WESTERN **RATTLESNAKE**

Found in North America and Mexico, these snakes' rattles are made of keratin – the same protein that's in your hair and fingernails!



# **GABOON VIPER**

**SNAKE SECRET** 

This super serpent, from Western or Central Africa, has the longest fangs of any venomous snake – five centimetres!

**VENOM USED TO TREAT:** Strokes

# **BRAZILIAN PIT VIPER**

**SNAKE SECRET:** 

This three-metre reptile is one of the most feared snakes in Brazil, South America!

**VENOM USED TO TREAT:** High blood pressure



#### **SNAKE SECRET:** At 5.5 metres, the Kind

**INDIAN COBRA** 

**SNAKES LIVED WITH** 

Snakes slithered onto the scene more than 100 million years ago, when

dinosaurs still roamed the Earth. More

primitive snakes, such as boas and pythons,

have traces of hind lea bones in their

lizard-like animals with legs. Snakes lost

their limbs over time, but because their

bodies are on the ground, they can

sense vibrations that tell them

when food – or danger – is

nearby.

Is this

a vine

snake

or an

**SNAKES CAN'T HEAR** Snakes don't have external ears to hear sound waves in the air. Instead, bones in their lower jaw pick up vibrations in the ground or water. The vibes trigger signals in the snakes' brains, which are received as

messages. Sss-super!

skeletons. This shows that they evolved from

Protected by law, Indian cobras make their 'hoods' by expanding the ribs in their necks!



Ever feel so hungry you could swallow a meal in one gulp? Well, a snake can! Its lower jawbone is hinged very loosely, so it can open its mouth really wide. Backwardcurved teeth are designed to grab prey and move it down its throat, while elastic skin and loosely attached ribs expand as the food moves towards its stomach. Boas and other huge snakes can even eat goats and deer - after a big meal, snakes can go weeks without food!

Open wide for the sedge

### **AFRICAN SAW-SCALED VIPER**

**SNAKE SECRET:** 

One of the most poisonous snakes in Africa, this biter has eye-shaped spots on its body. **VENOM USED TO TREAT:** 

**Heart attacks** 



KING COBRA

cobra is the longest of

all venomous snakes.

Its hiss sounds like a

growling dog!

