



**Access**

Professional Development

# Deadly Snakes of South Africa

Never handle any snake that you can't identify!

# ID



**BLACK MAMBA  
(DEONDROASPIS POLYLEPIS)**

- Distribution: Parts of KZN, Limpopo and Mpumalanga
- Colour: Dark Olive, greyish brown or gunmetal grey
- Length: 2.8-3.2m but up to 4.5m
- Venom: Neurotoxic
- Venom Effects: Progressive Weakness and Paralysis with or without minor swelling



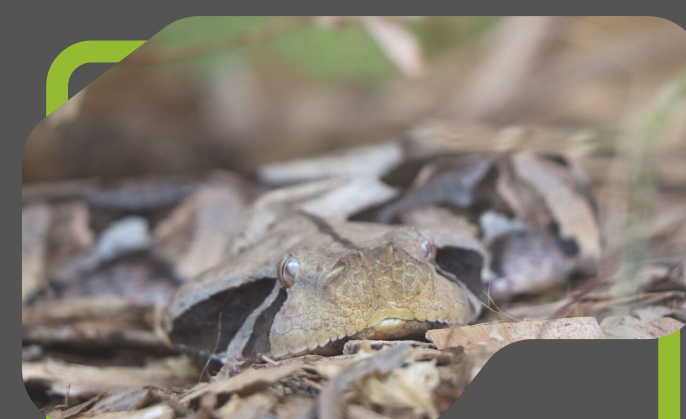
**GREEN MAMBA  
(DENDROASPIS ANGUSTICEPS)**

- Distribution: KZN along the coastal forests
- Colour: Uniform green with irregular yellow scales
- Length: 1.8-2.5m
- Venom: Neurotoxic
- Venom Effects: Progressive Weakness and Paralysis with or without minor swelling



**PUFF ADDER (BITIS ARIETANS)**

- Distribution: Throughout SA
- Colour: Colour varies but has V-shaped markings down the back pointing towards the tail
- Length: 0.9-1.2m but up to 1.4m
- Venom: Cytotoxic
- Venom Effects: Mixed Painful Progressive Swelling & Bleeding



**GABOON ADDER (BITIS GABONICA)**

- Distribution: Coastal Northern KZN
- Colour: Various shades of pastel colours with blocks along the back and triangles down the sides
- Length: 1.2m can get bigger
- Venom: Cytotoxic
- Venom Effects: Mixed Painful Progressive Swelling & Bleeding



**CAPE COBRA (NAJA NIVEA)**

- Distribution: Western, Northern and parts of the Eastern Cape as well as parts of the Free State
- Colour: Varied between yellow, brown, black, cream and a speckled phase
- Length: 1.4-1.6m
- Venom: Neurotoxic
- Venom Effects: Progressive Weakness and Paralysis



**SNOUTED COBRA (NAJA ANNULIFERA)**

- Distribution: KZN, Limpopo and Mpumalanga
- Colour: Yellowish brown with a yellow belly, or black and cream bands
- Length: 1.8-2.5m
- Venom: Neurotoxic & Cytotoxic
- Venom Effects: Progressive Weakness and Paralysis along with Painful Progressive Swelling



**FOREST COBRA (NAJA SUBFULVA)**

- Distribution: Coastal Northern KZN
- Colour: Black back half with a yellowish-brown front half
- Length: 2-2.7m
- Venom: Neurotoxic & Cytotoxic
- Venom Effects: Progressive Weakness and Paralysis along with Painful Progressive Swelling



**MOZAMBIQUE SPITTING COBRA  
(NAJA MOSSAMBICA)**

- Distribution: KZN, Limpopo
- Colour: Brown with an orange/salmon belly and black bands in the neck
- Length: 1.2-1.6m
- Venom: Cytotoxic
- Venom Effects: Painful Progressive Swelling



**BLACK SPITTING COBRA  
(NAJA NIGRICINCTA WOODI)**

- Distribution: Northern Cape and a small population in the Western Cape
- Colour: Black
- Length: 1.2-2m
- Venom: Cytotoxic
- Venom Effects: Painful Progressive Swelling



**RINKHALS (HEMACHATUS HAEMACHATUS)**

- Distribution: Parts of the Cape Provinces, KZN, Mpumalanga, Limpopo and Gauteng
- Colour: Black, brown or olive with white throat bands or black and yellow/orange body bands with yellow throat bands
- Length: 1.0-1.5m
- Venom: Cytotoxic & Neurotoxic
- Venom Effects: Progressive Weakness and Paralysis along with Painful Progressive Swelling



**BOOMSLANG (DISPHOLIDUS TYPUS)**

- Distribution: Found throughout South Africa apart from the driest parts and Lesotho
- Colour: Grey, Brown, Green, Red, Blue, Green with Black 'bands', black backs with yellow bellies
- Length: 1.5-2.0m
- Venom: Haemotoxic
- Venom Effects: Bleeding



**VINE SNAKE (THELOTORNIS CAPENSIS)**

- Distribution: Parts of KZN, Limpopo and Mpumalanga
- Colour: Cryptically coloured resembling a stick
- Length: 1.2-1.5m
- Venom: Haemotoxic
- Venom Effects: Bleeding

