

## **Northwestern Garter Snake (*Thamnophis ordinoides*)**

by *Tierra Curry*

Status: secure

Seeking: a sunny spot near a place to hide, a snug burrow for winter

Average weight: five ounces

Average length: one to two feet

Average lifespan: up to ten years, but usually two to five in the wild

Hometown: meadows, clearings, edges of thickets and wetlands, talus slopes

Hobbies: sunbathing, chasing frogs, cuddling, sticking tongue out at strangers

Fears: getting kidnapped in a kid's pocket, subdivisions and shopping malls, raccoons

Favorite Locations: Oaks Bottom, Smith and Bybee Lakes, very much prefers to live in the wild than to grow old stuck in a terrarium

Favorite Foods: earthworms, slugs, snails, salamanders, and frogs

Favorite Quotes:

"I have personal convictions to uphold. Ideals you might say. I prefer not to kill animals. I'm a humanist; I'd rather kill a man than a snake. Not because I love snakes or hate men. It is a question, rather, of proportion." – Edward Abbey, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*

"Well, then, let it go, let it go, if you're so bull-headed about it. We can get you some garter-snakes, and you can tie some buttons on their tails, and let on they're rattlesnakes, and I reckon that 'll have to do." Tom to Jim in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

"I suppose I might as well risk my life for a bunch of garter snakes as anything else. Soldiers die every day in the service of reptiles." Tom Robbins, *Another Roadside Attraction*

Friends: snakes to curl up with in the winter, people who aren't afraid to pick them up for a closer look and who are nice enough to let them go again