

# Eastern Smooth Earth Snake

## Eastern Smooth Earth Snake - PI.12

(*Virginia valeriae valeriae*)

**Identification:** 7" - 13 1/4". The Eastern Smooth Earth Snake is a small, plain snake. Ground color is gray or light brownish gray; it may have small black dots or a faint light stripe on back. The underside is white to pale yellow. Scales are smooth or weakly keeled (most keeled near tail) and in 15 rows; anal plate is divided. The smooth scales on this snake as well as details of facial scales can be used to distinguish the Eastern Smooth Earth Snake from the Northern Brown Snake. The Eastern Smooth Earth Snake has a horizontal scale directly in front of the eye, while the Northern Brown Snake does not.

**Where to find them:** Somewhat difficult to find because it tends to hide under debris, but it may be locally common in some areas. It is typically found in deciduous woodlands or in open areas near deciduous woodlands. In New Jersey it is found primarily in pitch pine forests.

**When to find them:** Active April through September.

**Range:** Entire Southern Region. Monmouth, Middlesex, Mercer, Hudson, Essex, Union, Somerset, and southeastern Morris Counties in the Northern Region.

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(*Virginia valeriae valeriae*) - text pg. 22



### Key Features

- Gray or reddish-brown in color.
- Dark shadow from eye to nostril.
- Small black dots may be present on back.
- Scales smooth or weakly keeled.



New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife ~ 2003



Excerpt from: Schwartz, V. & D. Golden, "Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of New Jersey". New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife 2002.

Order the complete guide at - <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/products.htm>