



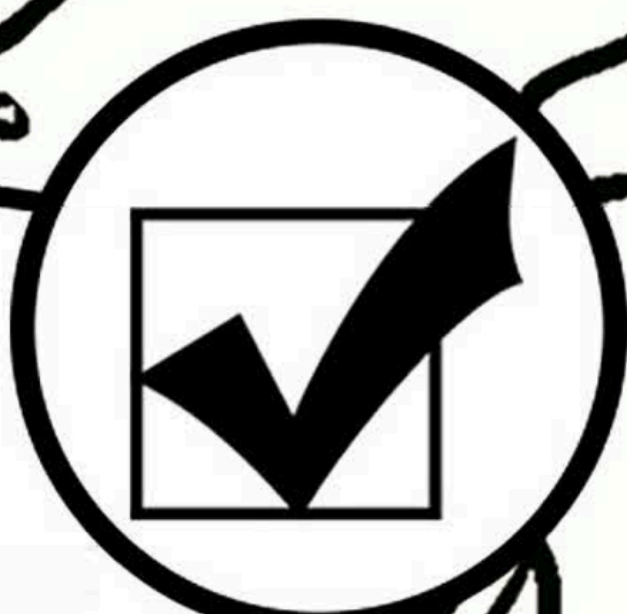
WILDLIFE PRESERVATION CANADA
SPECIES AT RISK

MASSASAUGA RATTLESNAKE

status: endangered in Canada
scientific name: *Sistrurus catenatus*



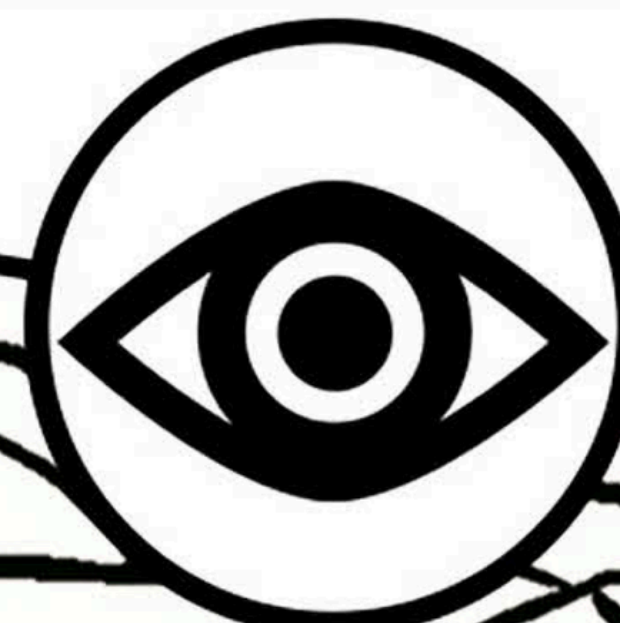
Massasaugas mostly eat small mammals, including rodents like field mice. They aren't able to chew their food so they must swallow it whole using a special body **adaptation** that allows them to open their bottom jaw really wide.



In **First Nations** traditions, the Massasauga rattlesnake is known as the medicine protector of the land. It teaches people that they should tread lightly on the earth and only take what they need from it.

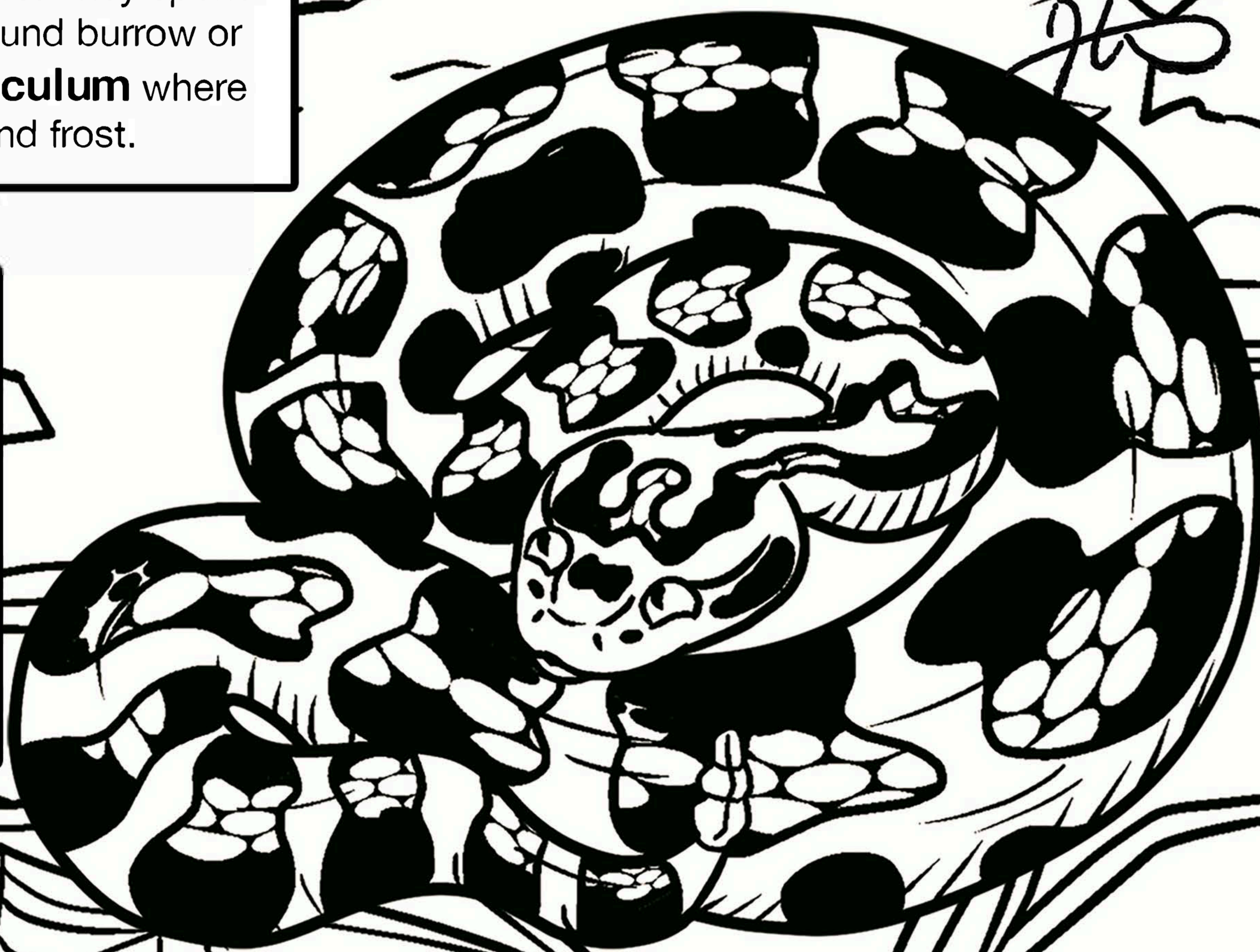


Massasauga rattlesnakes live in rock outcrops, grasslands, wetlands, and the shores of lakes and rivers. They spend their winters in an underground burrow or chamber called a **hibernaculum** where they can escape the cold and frost.



The Massasauga rattlesnake has a blotch pattern along its back and a rattle at the tip of its tail that makes a buzzing sound when it shakes. If the snake feels threatened, it will vibrate its rattle as a warning signal that it is **venomous** and will bite if harmed.

Massasauga rattlesnakes don't lay eggs. The adult female carries the babies in her body for about 4 months while they grow, and then gives birth to live young in mid-summer. This process of carrying the baby snakes inside is called **gestation**.



WORD SSSSSSSSSSSSSSEARCH

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RATTLE
ADAPTATION
FIRSTNATIONS
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SNAKE

VENOMOUS GRASSLAND SIGNAL OUTCROPS CONSERVATION

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