

Snakes and Lizards Creep and Crawl

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Ranger Casey holds small boa snake

In June, guest speaker Mike Sutton thrilled families with his entourage of live animals during the *Reptilian Encounters* program at the Glory Hole Amphitheater, at New Melones Lake. He engaged visitors during his presentation on the importance of reptiles in the ecosystem, how to react if you see a reptile and what to do if you are bitten.

Mike answered dozens of children's questions about the mysterious reptiles before unveiling over 40 different live species including desert lizards, tortoises, and whip-snakes. The Western Pacific rattlesnake was also presented side-by-side with its lookalike, a gopher snake.

The species were then taken out of their tanks allowing children to physically touch them in a safe environment. Participants of all ages also took part in making crafts such as snake mobiles, popsicle-stick lizards and pipe cleaner spiders and snakes.



Mike Sutton educating the attentive audience