

# constrictor snake attacks

## Large Constrictor Snake Attacks

Seventeen people have died from constrictor snake related incidents in the United States since 1978, including one person who suffered a heart attack during a violent struggle with his python and a woman who died from a *Salmonella* infection. Four babies sleeping in their cribs, as well as three other children have been squeezed to death by large constrictor snakes. Scores of adults and children have been injured during attacks by these deadly predators. Youngsters have been attacked while playing in their yards, compressed to the point of unconsciousness, nearly blinded when bitten in the face, and suffered numerous other painful, traumatic, and disfiguring injuries. Unsuspecting people have been attacked by someone else's escaped or released constrictor snake while tending to their gardens, making lemonade in their kitchens, sleeping in their beds, or protecting children and pets playing in their yards. The snakes are victims, too—some have been sprayed with fire extinguishers, shocked with stun guns, or crudely decapitated with meat cleavers, hacksaws, or axes in a desperate effort to stop attacks. Following is a partial list of dangerous incidents involving constrictor snakes.

**“The baby’s dead.  
Our stupid snake got  
out in the middle of  
the night and  
strangled the baby.”**

Florida man in a  
frantic 911 call after  
finding the family’s  
pet Burmese python  
killed his girlfriend’s  
2-year-old daughter as  
she slept in her crib

Constrictor snakes are wild animals who prefer to be left undisturbed in their natural habitat.

The average pet owner cannot provide the specialized care needed to maintain these animals in a humane and healthy manner.

Many pet snakes suffer from starvation, dehydration, parasites, respiratory infections, mouth rot, and other symptoms of neglect.

**July 16, 2012/Plymouth, Massachusetts:** A 9 to 12-foot escaped pet python who had been loose for two days emerged from some bushes and bit a man on the leg as he was climbing into his minivan with his wife and 3-year-old child. The python would not let go until the man stepped on the snake’s neck and pulled his leg away. He was treated at a hospital. Police cordoned off the area while animal control officers removed the snake. The snake was returned to the owner after he paid a \$100 fine.<sup>1,2</sup>

**July 12, 2012/Caruthersville, Missouri:** A man reaching into his garden to pick what he thought was a cucumber instead found a 6 to 7-foot albino python. He hit the snake with a hoe when the python began to bite at him and chased him. Police came and picked up the snake. The python belonged to a neighbor who had several other constrictor snakes and alligators. A 7 to 8-foot boa constrictor escaped at the same time and remained on the loose.<sup>3</sup>

**June 5, 2012/Colorado Springs, Colorado:** A snake exhibitor went to the emergency room after he was bitten in the face by his 18-foot tiger reticulated python—just days after the snake had been used for a presentation at an elementary school. The bite measured nine inches from the top of the man’s nose to the bottom of his throat, caused profuse bleeding, and missed his eye by one-half inch.<sup>4</sup>

**May 28, 2012/Bayonne, New Jersey:** A man was taken by ambulance to a medical center after he was bitten on the arm by his 6-foot boa constrictor.<sup>5</sup>

**March 15, 2012/Bridgewater, Massachusetts:** A 6-foot, 65-pound albino Burmese python attacked a pet shop employee, swallowing his hand and coiling around his arm. It took several paramedics to get the snake to unlock his grip. The man was treated at a nearby hospital.<sup>6</sup>

**February 13, 2012/Bozeman, Montana:** Police wrangled a loose boa constrictor after a resident reported being bitten by a snake she kept in her apartment.<sup>7</sup>

**July 26, 2011/Guadalupe County, Texas:** A 48-year-old experienced wildlife rehabilitator was attacked in her kitchen by a 14-foot boa constrictor as she reached



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“When they wrap around you, every time you move, it gets tighter.”

Teenager who was hospitalized following an attack in Nevada by her father's 15-foot Burmese python

into the tank to give the animal water. The snake bit her hand and coiled half of its body around her arm. The woman began to feel weak and faint during the 20-minute attack. Firefighters attempted to cut off the snake's head to free her. The partially decapitated snake survived and was sent to a veterinary college. Days later, the woman still had not recovered sensation in parts of her hand.<sup>8,9</sup>

**May 1, 2011/Opelousas, Louisiana:** A gardener cutting weeds in a client's yard in a residential neighborhood encountered a 5-foot snake with an estimated 6-inch circumference, believed to be a python. As he reached to pick up the snake, the animal latched onto his hand and dragged the 6-foot, 143-pound man into the bushes, swallowing his hand and shredding the tops of his fingers. The snake escaped when authorities arrived.<sup>10</sup>

**April 12, 2011/Lyons, Kansas:** A woman was attacked when she removed an 8-foot python from its cage for feeding. The snake latched its jaws onto the side of the woman's neck and would not let go. A child in the house called police and an officer forced the jaws of the snake apart with his hands.<sup>11</sup>

**October 31, 2010/West Jordan, Utah:** A 15-foot, 140-pound Burmese python brought to a Halloween party to entertain children attacked a 10-year-old boy. The child's shirt was covered with blood and he suffered bite wounds to the face, chin, and under the ear.<sup>12</sup>

**September 7, 2010/Sumiton, Alabama:** Police issued a warning that officers were searching for an “extremely aggressive” python in the community. The snake was described as up to 10-feet long and 10 to 12-inches in diameter. One woman was treated by paramedics after she was attacked and bitten on her arms and legs in her backyard while trying to keep the snake from reaching her child.<sup>13,14,15</sup>

**August 26, 2010/Sebastian, Florida:** A woman was attempting to feed her 12-foot Burmese python when it bit her hand and constricted around her arm. The woman was treated at a medical center and authorities euthanized the snake.<sup>16</sup>

**June 27, 2010/Hope, Indiana:** A 1-year-old boy was bitten on the hand by a 4-foot-long pet boa constrictor who escaped from a cage and was hiding in a dresser drawer. The snake had been on the loose for a few days.<sup>17</sup>

**June 9, 2010/Papillion, Nebraska:** A 34-year-old man was strangled to death by his 9-foot, 25-pound pet red-tailed boa constrictor while showing the animal to a friend. The man had often taken the snake outdoors and let children play with the animal.<sup>18</sup>

**October 23, 2009/Panama City, Florida:** A construction worker was bitten twice on the hand by a 4-foot albino Burmese python after he attempted to move the snake from a pile of dirt at a home under construction. Paramedics treated the man on the scene.<sup>19</sup>

**July 1, 2009/Sumter County, Florida:** A 2-year-old girl was killed in her crib by an 8½-foot Burmese python who escaped from an enclosure in her home. Weighing only 13 pounds, the snake was determined to be severely underweight. The snake had been purchased seven years earlier at a flea market. The child's mother and her boyfriend



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“I begged him to get rid of it ... It’s too late now.”

Heartbroken mother of a New York teenager killed by his pet Burmese python

were convicted of third degree murder, manslaughter and child neglect and sentenced to 12 years in prison.<sup>20,21,22</sup>

**January 21, 2009/Las Vegas, Nevada:** A 3-year-old boy was bitten and squeezed to the point of unconsciousness by an 18-foot reticulated python that the family was taking care of for a friend. It took six police officers, an animal control officer and the mother, who stabbed the snake with a kitchen knife, to free the child. The child had “light brown stuff” coming from his mouth and his face turned blue. As the mother began CPR, the injured snake then wrapped around her waist. The toddler was hospitalized over night. The snake had been in the home for four to six weeks and had somehow gotten loose. The snake was euthanized. The parents were charged with felony child abuse and ultimately entered a plea deal for a misdemeanor charge.<sup>23,24,25</sup>

**October 21, 2008/Virginia Beach, Virginia:** A 25-year-old woman was strangled to death by her 13-foot pet reticulated python, apparently when she was attempting to administer medication to the animal.<sup>26</sup>

**August 30, 2008/Las Vegas, Nevada:** A 13-year-old girl visiting her father was attacked by a pet Burmese python while she was sleeping in a bed. Responding to the commotion, her father and uncle were unable to uncoil the snake. They decapitated the approximately 15-foot snake with a butcher knife to rescue the girl. The teenager was hospitalized overnight with bruised ribs and a swollen abdomen. The snake reportedly escaped from a large tank with locks. The same day, a student zookeeper in Venezuela was crushed to death by a Burmese python.<sup>27,28</sup>

**July 31, 2008/Melbourne, Florida:** A Brevard Zoo camp counselor was treated at a hospital after being bitten on the neck by a 5-foot, 14-pound boa constrictor while exhibiting the snake to a group of children.<sup>29</sup>

**July 16, 2008/Gorham, Maine:** A woman found an 8-foot reticulated python amongst the clothes inside of her washing machine. The woman called a local animal trapper who was attacked by the snake before wrestling it into a plastic bag and transporting it to a local zoo.<sup>30</sup>

**April 17, 2008/Eugene, Oregon:** A female employee at a pet store was attacked by a 12-foot Burmese python when the snake bit her hand and coiled around her arm. It took several emergency responders to pry the snake’s jaws open and unwrap the snake. The snake lunged and tried to bite a police sergeant as he was returning the snake to a cage.<sup>31</sup>

**September 7, 2007/Deland, Florida:** An animal control officer suffered painful bite wounds on the back of the hand and on the finger after he was bitten twice by a 5-foot boa constrictor. The snake, believed to be a released or escaped pet, was being removed from underneath a woman’s car where he had wrapped himself around coil springs in the wheel well.<sup>32</sup>

**April 3, 2007/Miami, Florida:** A 3-year-old boy was bitten in the face by a 6-foot boa constrictor when posing with the snake for a photograph at a theme park, and was taken to a hospital for treatment.<sup>33</sup>



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“Our treatment at the scene was for a severe constricting injury. When we arrived, the patient was in critical condition.”

Paramedic who treated a Missouri man who was constricted by his 15-foot python

**January 12, 2007/Lynn, Massachusetts:** A teenager making lemonade started screaming after he was bitten on the toe by a 2½-foot albino python who was hiding under the dishwasher in his kitchen. It is unknown where the snake came from. The family called police who took the snake, described as a type of python that can reach 10-feet in length, to a local animal hospital.<sup>34</sup>

**December 31, 2006/Tarpon Springs, Florida:** An 18-year-old aquarium employee was attacked for 10 minutes by a 14-foot, 100-pound Burmese python while holiday tourists watched in horror. The snake bit her hand and wrapped around her arm, waist, and neck. A police taser was needed to get the snake to let go. The woman was treated at the hospital for wounds to her hands. Previously a man was bitten when feeding the snake.<sup>35</sup>

**December 16, 2006/Camp Dennison, Ohio:** A 48-year-old man was strangled to death by his pet 14-foot Burmese python. When the victim reached to pick the snake up, the animal coiled around his neck and would not let go. It took three paramedics to get the snake off of the man.<sup>36,37</sup>

**November 29, 2006/Uniontown, Pennsylvania:** A 47-year-old man was feeding his daughter’s 8-foot albino Burmese python when the snake bit his hand and wrapped tightly around his arm. A police officer used a taser to subdue the snake and paramedics treated the man for an injured hand.<sup>38</sup>

**September 2006/Lanesville, Indiana:** A 23-year-old man with experience handling reptiles was killed by his 14-foot reticulated python. A medical examiner determined that the death was consistent with asphyxiation caused by compression of the neck and chest.<sup>39</sup>

**August 29, 2006/Hamilton, Ohio:** A 13-foot, 100-pound albino Burmese python bit and began swallowing a woman’s hand, then coiled around her arm. It took four firefighters to free the woman from the snake’s grasp. The woman was treated at the hospital for deep puncture wounds to her hand.<sup>40</sup>

**June 2006/Belmar, New Jersey:** A 16-year-old high school student sustained puncture wounds and bruising after she was bitten on the forearm by a 5-foot boa constrictor kept in a classroom. The snake lunged for her as another student was holding the snake.<sup>41</sup>

**September 20, 2005/Plumstead, Pennsylvania:** A police officer was bitten while recapturing an escaped 13-foot, 100-pound pet Burmese python. The python had escaped six weeks earlier and was found 100 yards away from the owner’s home. Both on and off duty officers searched for the snake, which included combing the woods in the pouring rain and bringing in search dogs.<sup>42,43,44</sup>

**November 23, 2004/Corpus Christi, Texas:** A 20-year-old woman needed 17 stitches to her hand after a 13-foot Burmese python she had purchased a few days earlier bit her hand and coiled around her hand and neck. She was rescued by friends. A local animal control officer reported that in addition to this case, he had seized a 7-foot Burmese python and an 8-foot red-tailed boa constrictor the previous week.<sup>45</sup>



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“Another 2 millimeters lower and I think (the fang) would have gone into his eye and blinded him. That thing must have grabbed his whole face. There were puncture marks all over his face.”

A cosmetic surgeon who operated on a 10-year-old New Jersey boy who was bitten on the face by his brother's African rock python

**July 21, 2004/Overland Park, Kansas:** A teenager was showing off the family's 15-foot, 140-pound pet python when the animal coiled around his arm and began to squeeze, turning the boy's arm blue. The snake bit the teen and his mother, and they called 911. Emergency crews used a fire extinguisher to get the snake to loosen his grip.<sup>46</sup>

**July 7, 2004/Terre Haute, Indiana:** A 15-year-old girl was treated for a wound after she was bit by her neighbor's pet python. The neighbor, who had purchased the snake at a pet shop, admitted that he had also previously been bit by the snake.<sup>47</sup>

**July 5, 2004/Mandeville, Louisiana:** A man was bitten on the finger while trying to capture his neighbor's 16-foot Burmese python. The snake was on the loose for several days and this was the second time the animal had escaped.<sup>48</sup>

**April 3, 2004/Boston, Massachusetts:** A 7-foot pet Burmese python attacked a 43-year-old woman in her apartment. Her teenage son called police and they found the woman on her knees with the snake “clamped onto her left arm and the other end in a stranglehold on her leg.” Rescuers pried the snake off of her and took her to the hospital.<sup>49</sup>

**March 31, 2004/Fort Pierce, Florida:** A woman filed a \$15,000 lawsuit after she was bitten by a man's red-tailed boa constrictor while cleaning the snake's cage. The suit alleges the snake “attacked and bit her about her arm, hand and body,” causing disfigurement and mental anguish.<sup>50</sup>

**July 16, 2003/Mansfield, Texas:** A 15-foot Burmese python escaped after biting a 14-year-old caretaker on the hand. The snake was recaptured ten days later.<sup>51</sup>

**June 9, 2003/Brevard County, Florida:** A 13-foot, 80-pound Burmese python escaped from a home. The mother of the snake's owner found the snake in the yard wrapped around her 3-year-old Mountain Feist dog. She was able to free the dog, but the snake then wrapped around her leg. Rescue workers freed her and returned the snake to his cage.<sup>52</sup>

**April 8, 2003/Washington, District of Columbia:** A woman surrendered her Burmese python to animal control after the snake bit a friend believed to be HIV-positive.<sup>53</sup>

**December 2, 2002/Marina, California:** A female student was bitten on the finger by a 3-foot boa constrictor kept in the middle school classroom.<sup>54</sup>

**October 8, 2002/Bradenton, Florida:** A 9-foot reticulated python, believed to be a released or escaped pet, bit a man who was trying to protect his pet ducks from the snake who had entered his property. Paramedics treated the man at the scene for cuts to his wrist.<sup>55</sup>

**September 28, 2002/East Lake, Alabama:** A 34-year-old required medical attention after being bitten on the leg by a boa constrictor.<sup>56</sup>

**August 28, 2002/New York City, New York:** A 22-year-old woman staying at a Queens motel was bitten on the hand by her 9-foot albino Burmese python. Police rushed to the scene after receiving an emergency call from the hotel clerk. The



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“She thought for sure it would kill her and the baby.”

Husband of an 8-month pregnant woman who was attacked by a 9-foot Burmese python in California

woman was taken to the hospital and animal control removed the snake.<sup>57</sup>

**May 2002/Indianapolis, Indiana:** A 10-year-old boy was attacked by a 10-foot Burmese python brought to a pet store by a customer. The snake bit him on the chest and shoulder, inflicting about 40 puncture wounds, and coiled around his shoulders. The boy’s mother filed a lawsuit against the pet shop for the physical pain and mental anguish her son suffered as a result of the incident.<sup>58</sup>

**February 10, 2002/Aurora, Colorado:** A 43-year-old man was strangled to death by his 10-foot, 80-pound pet Burmese python. Several emergency responders were required to free the man from the snake’s grip. The snake was later euthanized.<sup>59,60</sup>

**December 2001/California:** A 3-month-old infant was taken to a hospital emergency room after a day of bloody diarrhea and fever caused by *Salmonella*. The infant’s father was a high school biology teacher who often draped a large snake (i.e., a boa) over his shoulders in the classroom. He would wash his hands—but not change his clothing—before going home and holding his child. The snake was found to be the source of the child’s *Salmonella*.<sup>61</sup>

**August 22, 2001/Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania:** An 8-year-old girl was strangled by her father’s 11-foot, 26-pound pet Burmese python. The child had been left home alone, and the snake broke through the top of the cage. Paramedics said she was not breathing when they arrived; she was taken to a hospital and placed on a ventilator until she was pronounced brain dead two days later. An autopsy showed the cause of death was compression of her neck and chest.<sup>62,63</sup>

**July 2, 2001/Pawtucket, Rhode Island:** Two girls were treated at a hospital after being bitten by a 2-foot red-tailed boa constrictor while playing with the snake.<sup>64</sup>

**May 17, 2001/Beloit, Wisconsin:** A 5-year-old boy was bitten by a 10-foot python who escaped from a homemade glass cage and crawled into the boy’s bed. The snake was one of two pythons kept as family pets.<sup>65</sup>

**April 25, 2001/Lawrence Township, New Jersey:** A 10½-foot African rock python lunged at a 10-year-old boy, biting his face and puncturing his eyelid and cheek and barely missing his eye. Troopers got the snake to release its grip and took the boy to the hospital where he was treated by a cosmetic surgeon. The snake belonged to the boy’s 17-year-old brother.<sup>66,67</sup>

**April 12, 2001/Oklahoma City, Oklahoma:** A woman died from septic shock related to a *Salmonella* infection after obtaining a transfusion of blood platelets. The platelet donor’s 9-foot pet boa constrictor was identified as the likely source of the *Salmonella*. The type of *Salmonella* found in a stool sample from the snake matched that found in the platelets. The man exhibited no symptoms at the time of his donation, but had been ill two weeks previously and taken antibiotics. A second patient who received platelets from the man also contracted *Salmonella* but was healthier at the time of the transfusion and lived.<sup>68</sup>

**May 2, 2000/Chicago, Illinois:** Concerned about the safety of his children, a resident brought his 12-foot tiger reticulated python to the police station after the snake tried



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“If she would have gotten around my neck, I would not be alive right now.”

Nebraska man after paramedics freed him from a 20-minute struggle with his pet python

to attack him. The snake was turned over to the state agriculture department.<sup>69</sup>

**December 10, 1999/Woodlawn, Alabama:** A woman required medical attention after being bitten on both hands by a python.<sup>70</sup>

**September 27, 1999/Oklahoma City, Oklahoma:** Parents and their 8-year-old son returned home to find a reticulated python, apparently left behind by a previous tenant, coiled around the family dog. The dog was dead. The python struck at the father as he attempted to uncoil the snake from the dog's remains. A nature center picked up the snake and determined the animal was emaciated. The incident caused the mother to seek treatment for panic disorder.<sup>71</sup>

**August 29, 1999/Centralia, Illinois:** A couple's 1-year-old, 7½-foot African rock python escaped from an enclosure and killed their 3-year-old son while he was sleeping. They had obtained the snake three months earlier.<sup>72</sup>

**August 4, 1999/Leesburg, Florida:** An 18-month-old boy who was playing on his patio was bitten on the face and nearly squeezed to death by his father's 13-foot, 80-pound Burmese python. The boy's upper and lower eyelids were pulled off of the facial bone and the snake's teeth punctured his scalp to the skull. The boy's father was bitten several times trying to rescue his child. The boy underwent two hours of surgery to reattach his eyelids and was expected to face reconstructive surgery and some scarring. The snake was euthanized.<sup>73,74</sup>

**July 18, 1999/Gaithersburg, Maryland:** A woman investigated after hearing the family's 20-pound dog yelping in the backyard and found the dog being attacked by a 12-foot snake described as either a boa constrictor or Burmese python. During the 15-minute struggle, family members tried pulling the snake off the dog with their hands and hitting the snake with a leash, surfboard, and shovel. The snake lunged at them while still gripping the dog. After being struck with a shovel about 30 times, the snake finally released the dog who was limp, bleeding, and not breathing, but later revived and was rushed to a veterinary clinic. A neighbor shot and killed the snake.<sup>75</sup>

**June 17, 1999/Albany, New York:** A police officer was bitten by a boa constrictor while assisting an animal control officer in removing the snake from an apartment. The snake had been abandoned by a tenant.<sup>76</sup>

**October 17, 1998/Putnam, Connecticut:** A 19-foot, 260-pound Burmese python ripped a toilet out of the floor and then attacked a 27-year-old, 200-pound man, pinning him to the floor, coiling around his body and chest, and swallowing his arm. It took three police officers to rescue the man, who was rushed by ambulance to a nearby hospital with 35 punctures and slash wounds from his thumb to forearm. The victim stated, “It hurt like a vise. When the teeth were going into my bone, I could feel it.” Authorities killed the python.<sup>77</sup>

**June 5, 1998/Darien, Illinois:** A DuPage County Forest Preserve police officer recalled an incident during his five years on the force when he was bitten while capturing a 7-foot python who children had released at Waterfall Glen Forest Preserve.<sup>78</sup>

**April 28, 1998/New York City, New York:** A freshman at a Manhattan high school



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“For a snake to be strong enough to pull me in a bush — I’m 6 feet tall and weigh 143 pounds, and he pulled me in a bush.”

Louisiana gardener who was bitten and dragged by a 5-foot python loose in a residential area

was bitten on the face by a 5-foot, 15-pound Burmese python kept in a classroom. The boy was taken to the hospital where he received five stitches to close a deep gash above his eye.<sup>79</sup>

**January 21, 1998/Houston, Texas:** Police discovered a boa constrictor inside a stolen convertible they had recovered. A mechanic was bitten while trying to remove the snake.<sup>80</sup>

**September 1, 1997/Clifton, New Jersey:** An 8-foot python sprang up, bit a 28-year-old man on the face, and coiled around his neck as he opened the tank to give the snake water. Hearing his screams, the man’s sister cut off the snake’s head with a butcher knife.<sup>81</sup>

**August 11, 1997/Anaheim, California:** A 10-year-old boy was attacked by his pet 12-foot, 65-pound African rock python. The python, who was described “as thick as a man’s thigh,” latched onto the boy’s hand and coiled tightly around his arm as he was giving him a bowl of water. The boy’s older brother stabbed the snake several times while waiting for paramedics to arrive. Worried that the snake would break his arm, paramedics decapitated the snake with a kitchen knife. The boy was treated at a medical center. One paramedic commented this was the third child he has rescued “from the suffocating embrace of pythons.”<sup>82</sup>

**July 10, 1997/Pompano Beach, Florida:** A woman was awakened by a 5½-foot boa constrictor curled around her neck. The snake had escaped from a neighbor’s bathtub.<sup>83</sup>

**January 27, 1997/Lake Delton, Wisconsin:** Two pet shop owners were attacked by a 20-foot, 275-pound reticulated python on display at their shop. The snake bit one man on the hand and wrapped around his chest and face, causing him to pass out. The co-owner was bitten on the hand and arm. Four officers captured the snake while the shop owners were taken to the hospital.<sup>84</sup>

**November 20, 1996/Pittsburg, California:** A 33-year-old nursing student was attacked by his 10-foot, 35-pound Burmese python while changing a light bulb in the snake’s enclosure. The snake bit his hand and started coiling around his arm. A neighbor in the mobile home community heard his screams and helped cut off the snake’s head with a meat cleaver.<sup>85</sup>

**October 9, 1996/Bronx, New York:** A 13-foot, 44-pound Burmese python, kept as a pet by two teen-age brothers who hoped to have careers caring for reptiles, killed one of the brothers, possibly mistaking him for food. The 19-year-old was found by a neighbor bleeding in a hallway of the housing project. The medical examiner reported that he died from “asphyxia due to compression of the neck by the snake.” The boys had purchased the snake three months earlier at a pet shop.<sup>86,87,88</sup>

**August 21, 1996/San Diego, California:** A woman who was eight months pregnant awoke to find their 9-foot Burmese python coiled around her stomach and biting her buttocks. The snake also coiled around her husband as he tried to free her. Paramedics used a hacksaw to decapitate the snake and free the couple. The incident, which occurred at downtown resident motel, was witnessed by their two



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“You’re not gonna die, sweetie. Momma’s not gonna let you die.”

California mother reassuring her 10-year-old son during a python attack while on a frantic 911 call

children, aged 4 and 5-years old.<sup>89</sup>

**August 11, 1996/Lincoln, Nebraska:** A 24-year-old man was attacked by his 12-foot, 50-pound pet Burmese python. The snake was loose in his bedroom and lunged at his neck, bit him twice on the wrist, and cut off circulation when he coiled tightly around his arm. The man used his free hand to call 911 and paramedics helped uncoil the snake. The man was treated at a hospital and planned to euthanize the snake.<sup>90</sup>

**June 18, 1996/Williamstown, New York:** A 2-year-old girl was treated at a hospital after she was attacked by her father’s 10-foot reticulated python. The snake coiled around the girl’s neck and swallowed her forearm. Police shot and killed the snake.<sup>91</sup>

**August 25, 1995/Madison, Wisconsin:** A 13-year-old, 8-foot, 45-pound pet python lunged at a man’s face who was holding the snake while her cage was being cleaned. It took five to six people to release the snake’s jaws from the man’s nose. The man was treated at a hospital and he was scheduled to meet with a plastic surgeon.<sup>92</sup>

**May 12, 1995/Oceanside, New York:** A 7-year-old student was bitten on the finger by a 5-foot boa constrictor as the teacher held the snake for a photograph with a group of students. The girl developed an infection and suffered nightmares from the attack. Her parents filed a lawsuit against the school and the teacher. The teacher admitted the snake had once bit him in the face. A State Supreme Court Justice found that the school district and teacher were negligent in failing to prevent the snake from harming others.<sup>93</sup>

**November 4, 1994/Indianapolis, Indiana:** A 13-foot, 30-pound python bit a 4-year-old boy on the leg and coiled around his chest and legs, cutting off circulation, while the boy was playing in his basement. Five men were unable to pull the snake off the boy, so rescuers chopped off the snake’s head with an axe. The boy was treated at a hospital.<sup>94,95,96</sup>

**September 17, 1994/Conshohocken, Pennsylvania:** A snake, described by police as a 10-foot boa constrictor, nearly killed a 4-year-old girl as she was playing in her backyard with friends. The snake ambushed the girl from behind some tall grass, biting her buttocks and constricting her until she turned blue and was unable to talk. Two neighbors wrestled the snake off of the girl and put the snake in a trash can until police arrived. The girl was treated at a hospital. The snake belonged to neighbor who kept the reptile in his car.<sup>97,98</sup>

**May 9, 1994/Hartford, Connecticut:** A 20-year-old woman was attacked by her boyfriend’s 12-foot, 50-pound Burmese python. One of her two young children ran to a neighbor in the apartment building for help. When emergency responders arrived, they found her crouched on the floor with the snake wrapped around both her arms up to the shoulder. Rescuers spent 20 minutes prying the snake off of her and took her to the hospital.<sup>99</sup>

**July 20, 1993/Commerce City, Colorado:** A 15-year-old was killed by his brother’s 11½-foot pet Burmese python. He had snake bites on his body, and an autopsy found he was suffocated. The 8-year-old snake had been a family pet since she was only a foot long.<sup>100</sup>



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# constrictor snake attacks

“Any large constrictor should never be kept around small children.”

Snake expert and former zoo director commenting after a reticulated python killed a baby in Iowa

**May 15, 1993/Harahan, Louisiana:** A 47-year-old man, who owned at least 11 snakes including pythons and boa constrictors, died from a heart attack during an apparent struggle with his 16-foot, 200-pound reticulated python. The man had bite wounds on his arm and the python was found behind a sofa with three stab wounds. It took three officials to wrestle the wounded python and force him into a truck. The snake required 100 stitches and was later sold to a snake dealer.<sup>101,102,103</sup>

**January 17, 1992/Clayton, North Carolina:** A woman called 911 after her 12-foot pet python bit her hand. By the time rescuers arrived, the snake had swallowed her hand up to the wrist.<sup>104</sup>

**June 21, 1991/Long Beach, California:** Neighbors called for help after hearing the screams of a 9-year-old boy being attacked by his 12-foot pet Burmese python. Rescuers found the child with the snake swallowing his foot and coiled around his leg up to the knee.<sup>105</sup>

**July 23, 1990/Plano, Texas:** A 15-foot, 150-pound Burmese python kept at a school and handled by children attacked a trained wildlife biologist as she was changing the snake’s water. The snake bit her knee and coiled around her torso. Firefighters and school officials spent 20 minutes trying to get the snake to release its grip. The woman was treated at a hospital.<sup>106,107</sup>

**July 2, 1989/Kansas City, Missouri:** A 24-year-old man lost consciousness after his 15-foot, 50-pound python constricted around his body. Paramedics found the man in critical condition and took him to the hospital.<sup>108</sup>

**January 19, 1987/Weymouth, Massachusetts:** A 22-year-old woman was attacked and bitten on the ear by her 7-foot boa constrictor. Animal control subdued the snake by spraying her with a fire extinguisher. The snake went berserk while her cage was being cleaned, began hissing and growling, and tried to also bite a bureau, a telephone cord and the woman’s brother.<sup>109</sup>

**April 6, 1986/El Toro, California:** A 12-foot pet python crawled out from under a bed, bit a 26-year-old woman on the back of the neck, and coiled around her neck and head. Five friends were unable to uncoil the snake, so they cut off the snake’s head. The woman was treated for bite wounds.<sup>110</sup>

**August 6, 1984/Ottumwa, Iowa:** An 11-month-old boy was killed in his crib by his father’s 10-foot pet reticulated python who escaped from a cage. An autopsy revealed numerous bite marks on the infant’s face, shoulder, hands, and arms and evidence of asphyxiation. The snake, determined to be emaciated, was captured and euthanized.<sup>111,112,113</sup>

**April 27, 1983/St. Louis County, Missouri:** A man was crushed to death by his 16-foot, 100-pound pet Burmese python. His body was found by his wife and the snake was located near the body under a bed.<sup>114</sup>

**August 1982/Reno, Nevada:** An 8-foot reticulated python escaped from his cage, crawled into an adjoining bedroom, and killed a 21-month old boy in his crib. The snake belonged to an unrelated man who lived in the house.<sup>115</sup>



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**November 8, 1980/Dallas, Texas:** A 7-month-old girl was killed by her father's 8-foot pet reticulated python. The child died of asphyxiation and her head was covered with dozens of needle-like tooth marks. The snake had forced his way out of a covered 30-gallon aquarium and crawled into the baby's crib. The medical examiner reported it may have taken as long as 5 minutes for the baby to die from "traumatic asphyxiation."<sup>116</sup>

**September 19, 1978/Florence, Kentucky:** A 33-year-old reptile collector was strangled to death by one of three reticulated pythons, measuring 12, 14, and 16-feet, he kept in his basement. He was found by his wife lying on the steps with a snake wrapped around his neck.<sup>117</sup>

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