

Example Lecture for TOEFL Speaking Integrated Task 6

The Western Diamondback Rattlesnake can be longer than 7 feet, and it is the most fearsome of all rattlesnakes. Two interesting facts about this deadly venomous snake will help you understand more about its behavior and mating habits.

First of all, the Western Diamondback has a spade-shaped head, two fangs, and a venom system. The venom causes extensive damage, bleeding, and swelling in humans. This snake will coil when cornered, it will rattle fearsomely, and it will stand its ground. This rattlesnake bites 100's of people a year, more than any other venomous snake in the United States. Anyone bit by this snake will need to go to a nearby hospital to get anti-venom which will counteract the damaging effects of the diamondback's deadly bite.

The snake lives within a community of small mammals such as prairie dogs, rabbits, gophers, chipmunks, ground squirrels, mice, and rats. All of these animals can become its prey. The diamondback hunts at night by ambushing its victims along trails or even by attacking the small mammals in their burrows. Once the diamondback has a meal, it can go several weeks before eating again.

Second of all, the diamondback, like other male rattlesnakes of other species, becomes obsessed with female snakes during mating time, sometime in the spring. He will chase the female all day long every day. During mating, if the male rattlesnake encounters another male, the two snakes will wrestle each other for dominance.

In a type of dance, the two males wrap around each other, rearing and falling and body slamming until one of the snakes admits defeat. After the male diamondback mates with the female, she will give birth her to babies live in late summer. The young snakes are born complete with fangs and venom so that they are armed and dangerous at birth. As soon as the snakes are born, the mother abandons them.

The professor discusses about the Western Diamondback Rattlesnake. Using examples from the lecture, explain at least two facts about this snake.