

## *Eastern Ratsnake*

We have rodents around, so I (for one) have always been glad to have these large snakes around, too, though I recognize that not everyone at the winery is quite so thrilled.

When the boys were little, we would go on “snake hunts” after dinner, walking around the property and tipping up all of the landscaping wine barrels, hoping to find snakes underneath. We often would see garter snakes and sometimes would see milk snakes. The ratsnakes tend to find us instead, coming out to sun themselves in the yard or driveway.

This ratsnake coiled up in a defensive pose to mimic a rattlesnake when we went to move it; it's only the second time I've seen this behavior, but it was certainly impressive.

