

# GABOON VIPER

Kingdom: Reptilia Class: Serpentes Family: Viperadae  
*Bitis gabonica*

**Description:** The Gaboon Viper has a very large, thick body with distinctive markings and a leaf-shaped head.

**Length:** 4-7 feet

**Habitat:** Floor of the rainforest and forest fringes

**Distribution:** The equatorial belt of Africa

**Diet:** Carnivorous

**Life Span:**

**Status:** Not listed

## **Special Characteristics:**

- He is nocturnal and difficult to awaken during the daytime.
- When surprised, he remains still, flattening against the sand and making short jabs at the intruder and blowing noisily
- Although he generally will not attack, when the viper does it is extremely swift and highly toxic
- He is said to be a "loopier" or "sidewinder," because he throw loops of his body forward in a lateral fashion.
- Solitary
- Largest of the true vipers
- Their two inch fangs are the longest of any venomous snake

## **Reproduction:**

- Sexual maturity for males is 36 inches and females 48 inches
- They are live bearers producing up to 30 young at a time.
- Gestation is 7 months.
- Offspring measure 12 inches when born.

