

Snakebusters ®, venomous snake handling courses taught by Snake Man ® Raymond Hoser have the following vital components.

- 1 - Legal constraints in terms of reptiles (regulations and so on).
- 2 - Introduction to the basics of snakes and other reptiles (origins, physiology, habits, etc), including identification of reptiles to family level for all reptiles and a lesson on the use of keys as published to enable the participants to be able to identify down to species level if required.
- 3 - Hands on handling of all types of reptile (snake, lizard, tortoises and crocodile), with same-time explanation of the basics of each in terms of physical features, habits, handling and so on.
- 4 - Hands on handling of dangerously venomous snake species of all major types, including all dangerous Victorian snakes as well as most common varieties from elsewhere in Australia including Taipans (the world's most deadly snake) and Death Adders. The course participants handle all these snakes. No other snake handling course in Victoria or anywhere else in Australia offers this essential component and frankly they are grossly inferior. This "hands on" by participants is done in total safety in this course as all snakes used have been "voided" using the (world first) methods described in Hoser 2004 and later papers.
- 5 - Detailed "hands on" explanation of handling deadly snakes in the wild state using "voids", including use of appropriate tools, containers and the like. This includes details of what not to do, use and the like.
- 6 - Transportation protocols (legally and not-legally binding), including that which should be done, including standardized treatment for exoparasites, keeping accurate records and the like.
- 7 - Husbandry of all reptiles with an emphasis on the deadly species. This is needed for when reptiles must be retained as may occur from time to time (e.g. exotic species caught, injured reptile, young unexpectedly born and perhaps held for surrender to authorities, etc). The husbandry component of our course is important as many people who do the course intend keeping venomous reptiles at some stage (usually a special licence is needed for this and this aspect is covered). It should also be noted that not all reptiles caught or sought to be removed will be of the venomous kinds.
- 8 - Miscellaneous aspects including how to research material and find things out if required, including explanations as to how to separate fact from fiction in places like the internet where "information" abounds, but a lot is inaccurate.
- 9 - On site inspections of residences that have had venomous snake "problems" to highlight the features of these areas and to explain the movements of snakes within their physical, thermal, habitat and other constraints.
- 10 - On site explanations of where snakes retreat to after being seen. This vital component of our course is not emulated by most other outfits and we regard this as essential. Most snakes seen by people who call a "snake catcher" have fled by the time the snake catcher arrives and most improperly trained people fail to find the reptile often leading to customer dissatisfaction. Properly trained snake catchers find most "missing" snakes with relative ease.
- 11 - Details of what should be carried by the snake-catcher at all times and/or as preferred optional extras.
- 12 - What needs to be done in terms of leaving information with people at houses visited and the like, including post capture property inspections and the like.
- 13 - Touting for business. What works, what doesn't and realistic expectations as to income likely from a job as snake-catcher (not much, but fun when the jobs roll in).

14 - Basics of snake venom, bites and treatment.

15 - Dealing with the public in terms of factors like, a/ general dislike or fear of reptiles, b/ the reality of when reptiles are or must be killed, c/ removing snakes and snake habitat from residences, d/ when snake habitat cannot be removed, e/ public safety with snakes and in snake infested areas, f/ other matters of relevance

16 – Until recently, all participants are given a copy of the "[Hoser Wildlife Collection](#)" CD-rom which has the full page proofs of the 240 page reptile "Bible" [Australian Reptiles and Frogs](#) published in 1989 and now out-of-print in hard copy due to demand for the book, over 400 definitive scientific papers and articles by Raymond Hoser, published in journals worldwide, most individual papers in several formats, including MS Word and Adobe Acrobat enabling easy searching for information as needed at any stage and also including magnificent photos (The CD has thousands of quality photos on it). The full texts of 8 other books and a number of definitive reptile papers and articles by other leading herpetologists and reproduced on the CD-rom with their kind permission. (To buy the publications on the CD-rom individually as "hard copy" would cost over one thousand dollars!). As of 2022 all the preceding has been placed online on our website because a lot of new computers do not read disks.

17 - Certificate of completion (including legal statement) at end of course. This (and a signed indemnity) is sufficient for DSE (Victoria) to issue a permit as a reptile "controller" (to catch and relocate snakes), provided you satisfy their other statutory criteria (A/ A police check provided to the department B/ A properly filled in application form is given to DSE and C/ The prescribed fee (an annual fee) is paid.)

Further Notes:The time of the course is usually 8 hours, although it is best to allow a full day for the course (one day course). For catch/relocation courses the duration is usually 4 hours, but allow for a 2 hour overrun at times (max.). Due to the "fun" nature of the course, time literally flies and the day appears to be over almost before it starts. Usually courses start at 7 AM, run to 3 PM, but we say allow to finish later than this as we like to make sure all participants are fully briefed and satisfied in terms of their ultimate objectives. Our objectives are to teach people the "right way" to deal with reptiles, not just to make a quick buck, and to that extent we'd rather put in extra time and effort if that's what it takes. The cost (2022) is \$400 per person (payable on day) (\$600 on specially booked one on one courses, \$500 a person 2 on one and 400 for 3 or more). We can issue a tax invoice with ABN if need be. The venue (unless otherwise stated) is at the Snakebusters facility (488 Park Road, Park Orchards, Victoria, 3114, (Corner of Kebun Court)). Best to park outside the property on grass "nature strip" on arrival. At the start of the course, you will have to read and sign a standard ["indemnity" or "waiver of claim"](#) to protect both Snakebusters, DSE and agents in terms of snakes and bite related incidents, claims and the like. If unwilling to sign such a form, please don't book for the course.

Bring long pants and covered shoes to wear on the day (as needed) and food is provided (from local shop), which should be sufficient for you (if you have special diet needs, please bring own food/drink).

The teacher is Australia's Snakeman (TM), Raymond Hoser, also known as the "Snakebuster" (TM). [He's been at the leading edge of Australian herpetology for more than three decades.](#) He's caught and kept deadly snakes for more than 50 years and has discovered and named

numerous taxa of deadly snakes including Brown (*Pseudonaja*), Death Adders (9 of 15 named species, Genus *Acanthophis*), three of four species in the newly named genus *Pailsus* and was the man who discovered a new species of deadly *Tropidechis* (*sadleri*) from far north Queensland. In total he has discovered and named over 20 species of snake in Australia, over 200 species of reptile in Australia, over 100 species of snake worldwide and over 500 species of reptile globally, as well as over 100 species of frogs and more than 20 mammals, each being the highest totals for anyone alive (and in the context of Australia, more than anyone else ever has, or ever will).

See a recent official ICZN Zoobank listing of about 2,000 taxa discovered and named by Snakeman Raymond Hoser, dated mid 2022 at:

<http://www.snakebusters.com.au/Zoobank-listings-12-6-2022.pdf>



Methods used to catch and keep reptiles first used by Hoser and now standard in the industry include the use of wide based pinning sticks (e.g. squee-gee) to immobilize wild snakes, plastic containers as a safe option/alternative to contain wild snakes instead of bags, plastic tubs as snake cages for all snakes (as opposed to juveniles only), proactive treatment of captive snakes infected with viruses such as Paramyxovirus and Reovirus, which previously were regarded as an unavoidable death sentence for affected snakes, venomoid surgery via internal (as opposed to external) excision of venom glands, use of alternative snake foods and supplements (alternative to rodents), including meats, fish, bones, chicken necks and even vegemite TM, as well as other matters of significance.

Unlike other "snakies" who claim many years of (unverifiable) experience with snakes, Raymond Hoser's association with Deadly Snakes can be easily tracked through his scientific publications in [peer-reviewed Scientific journals](#) commencing in his teens (he is now in his 40's (2005)), and before that, newspaper clips from when in the 1970's and early 1980's he had venomous snakes (including Death Adders) stolen from his home in Sydney. No other teacher in Australia has such a notable CV in terms of venomous Australian [snakes](#).

For persons wishing to register interest in the venomous snake handling course/s please phone 0412-777-211 or (in Victoria, Australia) 9812 3322.

Legal note: Snakebusters are the ONLY government licenced reptile demonstrators operating in Victoria, to have had approval from an ethics committee, Department of Primary Industry (DPI) clearance AND been formally cleared by Worksafe Victoria to take venomous species into public places for the purposes of doing demonstrations.

Warning:

We have had numerous complaints about an unscrupulous so-called "snakehandler" doing so-called venomous snake handling courses in Melbourne, including their totally false claim that theirs is the only such recognised course (made to entrap unsuspecting novices).

This person is of limited experience (he alleges 10 years on his website, but has had a "demonstrator's" licence only since late 2005 and has since in writing admitted to no verifiable evidence prior to that date) and the course is of dubious value and not recognized by persons and entities including "Snakebusters" and various wildlife authorities. We and others do not refer work to persons who have completed such courses on the basis that it's our view that the teacher fails to properly train people and teaches people handling methods that are both dangerous to the person and likewise for the snake.

For example the teacher promotes use of metal tongs sometimes sold as "Pillstrom Tongs". These are not suitable for attempting to restrain moving snakes and have the added hazard of often breaking the snake's ribs and backbone. We have seen snakes caught with these tongs that have been fatally injured. Persons using these tongs have stated that they prefer to break the snake's back rather than get bitten, but besides the fact that the argument is questionable, the tongs themselves are cumbersome and actually increase the bite risk for the person using them.

TONGS BREAK SNAKE'S BONES!

On 5 June 2006, a man by the name of Jason Hall, died from a Taipan bite. He was bitten after inflicting pain on the snake with metal "snake tongs" as taught to him by a so-called snake handler. In an earlier case, a spokesman for the Australian Venom Research Unit, identified a person in 2004 that had been rushed to hospital as a result of a serious, life-threatening bite after attempting to capture a venomous snake using "tongs" as shown during a so-called snake-handling course taught by a so-called snake handler with no serious knowledge of the subject.

Tongs are also illegal to be used to handle snakes in Victoria and most other Australian states under existing cruelty to animals laws (in Victoria see: "Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986", Section 9 (1) (a and c)). Because [tongs increase the risk of adverse bite](#), their use is also illegal under the Victorian OH and S Act 2004. This "snake handler" is apparently immune from prosecution due to an

evidently corrupt and close relationship with key DSE officers who protect him. This man also brags on internet forums and in print publications of his knowingly breaking the law and being able to avoid prosecution. This does not however remove risks taken and serious venomous snake bites arising with students who graduate from his "courses" resulting from improper teaching and handling methods.

We've also been advised that the only "venomous" snake that the above-mentioned Victorian course participants are allowed to handle is the relatively innocuous and only mildly venomous back-fanged Brown Tree Snake (*Boiga irregularis*) which as a colubrid is not related to any venomous species from Victoria (family elapidae - which includes all the deadly ones with fangs at the front of the mouth) and hence gives the course participants no effective preparation for handling venomous snakes in the state of Victoria or for that matter pretty much anywhere else.

A poor quality 28 page leaflet (complete with blurred photos) handed to persons doing the course is replete with inaccurate and improperly referenced statements.

Also refer to the link at:

<http://www.smuggled.com/medre164.htm>

(see "[Warnings: Live reptile shows: New and unscrupulous operators](#)").