

Quick! How do you tell the difference between...

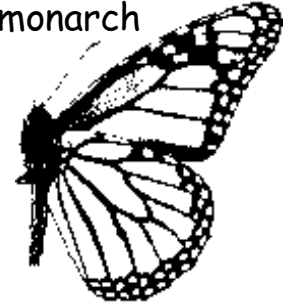
...a monarch butterfly and a viceroy butterfly?

1. Look at the lower wings: the viceroy has a bar that runs through the lower wing; the monarch doesn't.
2. The viceroy will be near willow; the monarch is more likely to be found around White Vine and milkweed plants.
3. At Corkscrew, the viceroy is common; the monarch is infrequent. So if you're not sure, it's probably the viceroy.

viceroy



monarch



...a banded water snake and a water moccasin?

The bodies are similarly colored in adults, the banded water snake can flatten its body to imitate a moccasin and flatten its head so it looks triangular when threatened, and the two frequent the same types of habitats. So look at the patterns on the heads instead of shapes or body colors:

1. the lower jaw of the banded water snake has a multi-lined "tortoise shell" pattern; the moccasin has a few wide bands (photos below),
2. the moccasin has a wide dark band on the side of the head through the eye; the banded water snake has a thin line just below the eye (photos below), and
3. the moccasin has a ridge that extends over the eye; the banded water snake doesn't (photos below).
4. The pupil of the Banded Water Snake's eye is round; the pupil of the Water Moccasin's eye is a vertical slit.

banded water snake



water moccasin



Other snakes with dark tops that may be found around water:

1. Eastern Mud Snake: coral and black on underside; head similar to banded water snake but instead of white on lower jaw, it's more brownish-red
2. Black Racer: solid whitish to creamish on underside of chin; head same width as body
3. Black Swamp Snake: bright scarlet red on underside, head close to same width as body; small (maximum length to 18")
4. Ringneck Snake: all black with red/orange/white/yellow ring just behind head; head same width as body; small (maximum length to 18")

Note: immature snakes are colored and sized differently: bands visible on sides of banded water snake and some white spots present; moccasin young brightly colored with noticeable thick orange to brownish bands around body; black racers spotted on sides. Male banded water snakes are thin bodied and much shorter