

REPTILES

50K People Sign Petition to Stop Georgia's Last Rattlesnake Roundup

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By John Virata

The last known rattlesnake roundup in the state of Georgia will be held this weekend in Whigham, and 50,000 people have signed a petition started by the Center for Biological Diversity, urging the Whigham Community Club, which hosts the event, to change it to a Humane Wildlife Festival.

The Center has petitioned the city for the last two years to stop the practice of capturing rattlesnakes and killing them at the annual event, which is the only such event remaining in the state.

People in Whigham and the surrounding community participate, hunting eastern diamondback rattlesnakes (*C. adamanteus*) and selling them at the event for meat and rattlesnake skins.



TODD PIERSON

Rattlesnake and other snake head trinkets for sale at the 2012 Rattlesnake Roundup in Whigham

All the other roundups in the state have stopped killing rattlesnakes but are now displaying them and other wildlife and educating attendees about the merits that these reptiles and other animals have on the local environments. Four states still currently hold rattlesnake roundups in which the snakes are killed, Georgia, Texas, Oklahoma and Alabama.