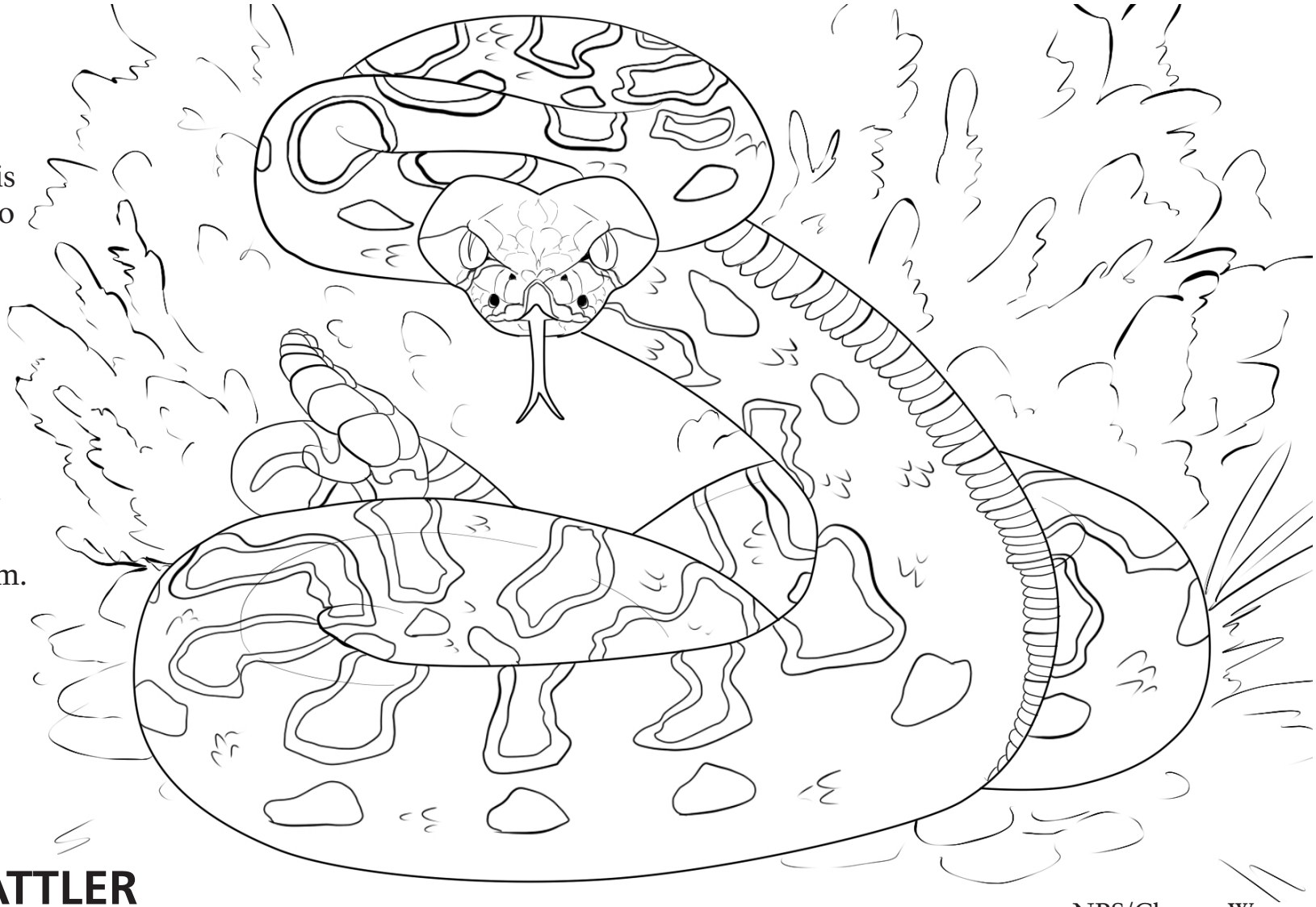
National Trails

Color the Trails

Emigrants sometimes spotted large rattlesnakes along the trails. Many kinds of rattlesnakes are found in the United States, and this one is a prairie rattler, which hunts prairie dogs. Like other rattlesnakes, a prairie rattler buzzes its tail as a warning and uses its fangs to inject venom into its prey, but it may also bite other animals and people who get too close. Sometimes rattlesnakes bit emigrants' oxen, horses, and other livestock, causing the animals' faces and legs to swell.

Does this prairie rattler look happy to see you? No, it is coiled and ready to strike and bite.

People often are bitten by snakes while trying to pick them up or kill them, so make sure you and your family keep a safe distance from them. If you see or hear a rattlesnake, step away and leave it alone!



PRAIRIE RATTLER

NPS/Cheyne Warren