

# SPOTLIGHT

## EASTERN GARTER SNAKE



Blow fly (Family Calliphoridae) laying eggs inside mouth of dead eastern garter snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis*) at Bartram's Garden, Philadelphia.

Maggots hatching from this fly's eggs may feed on the snake; however, just after I took this photograph ants began scavenging in the snake's mouth and, perhaps, preying on these eggs. I have found eastern garter snakes near the Fairmount Water Works in Center City. The first published reference to "garter" snakes in the vicinity of Philadelphia was in 1743, more than a decade before the systematic description and naming of *T. sirtalis*, by Carl Linnaeus.<sup>1</sup>