

Man calls police when a snake is found on his motorcycle

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Kelly "K.C." Slone was on his way home from work on his motorcycle about 11:30 p.m. Tuesday night when something struck at him. He looked down and realized there was a small Mojave rattlesnake partially wrapped around his handlebars.

He geared down carefully and gently stopped in the bike lane in the 900 block of South China Lake Boulevard, in front of Wal-Mart, to deal with the situation. He calmly called the Ridgecrest Police Department on his cell phone.

"The snake was moving forward. By the time I dismounted, he was on the gas tank," said Slone.

The police dispatcher reportedly did a double-take on hearing a "man needs assistance in removing the Mojave rattlesnake that is wrapped around his motorcycle tank."

"The snake had claimed the motorcycle and was not willing to relinquish it," said Police Lt. Kurt Fowler.

Slone works at the airfield on board the Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake. Apparently the snake stowed away on the motorcycle in the parking lot, while Slone was at work.

"There are a lot of snakes out where I work. It's not uncommon for them to be out and about at that time of night," said Slone.

The snake kept moving, apparently determined to stay aboard the bike.

"He planted his head under the housing for the headlight, and stayed there until the officers arrived," said Slone. "He didn't want to deal with anybody."

Police Sgt. Robert Obergfell and officers Kristen Lawson and Ryan Marrone came to the scene. Slone said the officers did 99 percent of the work, chasing the snake around with sticks in an effort to dislodge it.

The snake, however, had other ideas.

"He worked his way into the engine compartment," said Slone, who removed the compartment cover so officers could pursue the limber fugitive, described as nine to 12

was so short, it couldn't strike far enough to get at anybody.

"At one point, the snake actually got on the starter and lurched with the voltage. That irritated him," said Slone.

He said it took nearly an hour and a half for the team to finally pry the evasive reptile away from the motorcycle.

A2

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