



Who We Are and What We Do...

We are a group of dedicated citizens concerned about the environment. We came together because we care about preserving our habitat in its original state. We are taking powerful measures to make a positive impact on the future.

Our Mission

is to prevent and eliminate the spread and introduction of non-native flora and fauna into the native ecosystem.

~Special Burmese Python Issue~

Burmese python
Smooth scales; bold color pattern

Giant snakes invade
Much of the world struggles with "introduced species" – destructive plants and animals from elsewhere – but South Florida's Everglades swamp has a notable invader, a giant predatory snake.

Hatchling: 19-31 in. (48-79 cm)
Adult: 15-20 ft. (4.5-6 m)
Largest adults: 23 ft. (7 m); live 15 to 20 years

Nonvenomous; kills by constricting coils when longer than 8 ft. (2.4 m)

Eggs

Reproduces quickly: Female python lays 30 to 100 eggs at a time.

SOURCE: Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, US Geological Survey, American Museum of Natural History, US Fish & Wildlife Services

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HOW HAVE INVASIVE PYTHONS IMPACTED FLORIDA ECOSYSTEMS?



According to www.USGS.gov, non-native Burmese pythons have established a breeding population in South Florida and are one of the most concerning invasive species in Everglades National Park. Tens of thousands of invasive Burmese pythons are estimated to be present in the Everglades. Pythons compete with native wildlife for food, which includes mammals, birds, and other reptiles. Severe mammal declines in Everglades National Park have been linked to Burmese pythons.

The most severe declines in native species have occurred in the remote southernmost regions of Everglades National Park, where pythons have been established the longest. In a 2012 study, populations of raccoons had dropped 99.3 percent, opossums 98.9 percent, and bobcats 87.5 percent since 1997. Rabbits, deer, and other native species have effectively disappeared (see food chain graphic on next page). The mammals that have declined most significantly have been regularly found in the stomachs of Burmese Pythons removed from Everglades National Park and elsewhere in Florida. Raccoons and opossums often forage for food near the water's edge, which is a habitat frequented by pythons in search of prey.

A number of Burmese pythons have even been found as far south as Key Largo, and a few in the Lower Keys. However, there is as yet no evidence of a breeding population anywhere in the Keys. Because pythons regularly escape or are released from captivity, it can be difficult to determine whether a snake encountered in the Keys arrived there by swimming from the mainland or was a former captive pet on the island. Given the python's apparent ability to disperse via salt water, however, island residents and resource managers need to stay vigilant so as to be able to detect and eliminate arriving pythons before they become established.

WHERE ARE BURMESE PYTHONS IN THE FOOD CHAIN OF THE EVERGLADES?

**BURMESE PYTHONS ARE
NONVENOMOUS. THEY KILL
THEIR PREY BY
CONstriction.**



**ONCE THE PREY IS DEAD,
THEY FEED.**



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

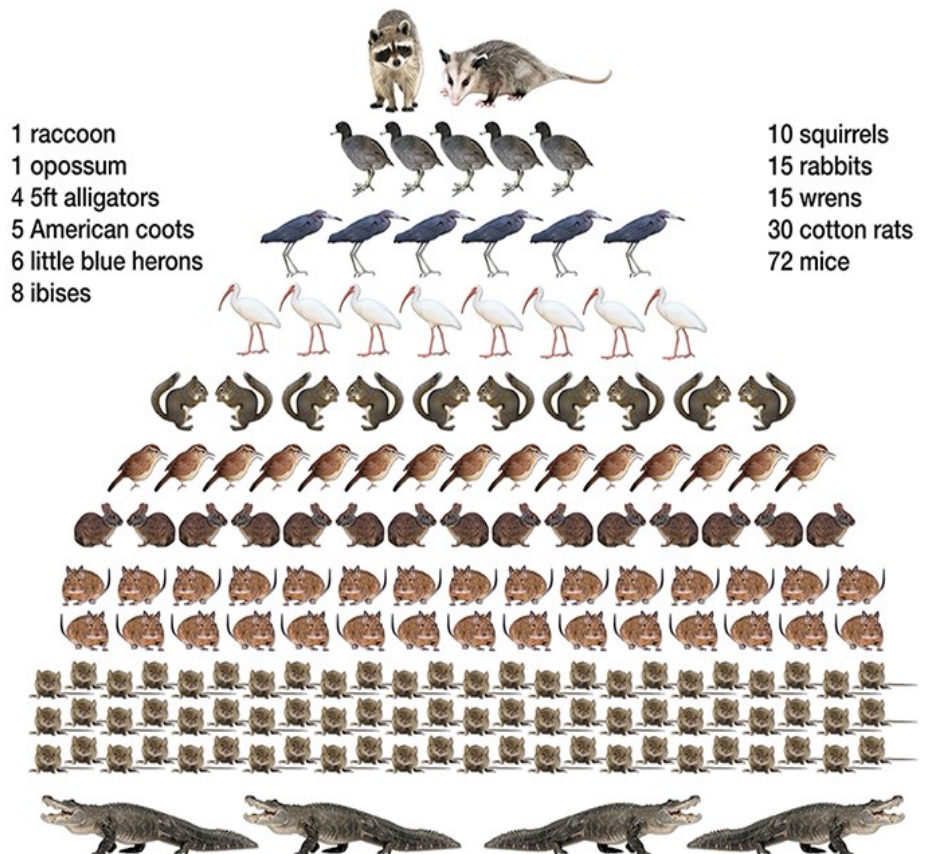
The Burmese Python has a stranglehold on the Everglades ecosystem.

Since making its way into the bountiful wild areas of South Florida, these snakes have thrived, taking a top position on the food chain. The scaled menace reproduces rapidly, grows to great lengths and breeds in large numbers, continuing to wreak havoc by feeding on most any living thing with a heartbeat. The python's adaptability to the Everglades environment has significantly increased its population and the snake has now decimated whole species of small mammals (such as the marsh rabbit).



A python devours a deer.

This pyramid of Everglades wildlife inhabitants depicts the typical intake of prey for a python to reach a length of 13 feet (over 5 to 7 years). Large pythons prey on deer, alligators and small mammals.



Source for pyramid graphic: Skip Snow, Everglades National Park & Dr. Stephan Secor, University of Alabama

What should I do if I see a python in the wild?

If you see a python in the wild, or suspect that a snake is a python or an invasive snake, you should take the same precautions for these constrictor snakes as one would take for alligators: avoid interacting with or getting close to them. If you are in Everglades National Park, you can report a python sighting to a park ranger. You can also report the animal via the “Ive Got 1” reporting hotline (888-483-4681), the EDDMapS reporting site or by using an iPhone application, IveGot1 - Identify and Report Invasive Animals and Plants in Florida. These reporting sites share reports so you only need to report the animal at one of them.

The FWC, and other organizations, have even held contests and offered incentives for the capture of these invasive snakes.



Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our services and products.

Phone: 561-352-1606

Email:

info@

oceanhabitatandwildliferescue.org

Web:

<http://oceanhabitatandwildliferescue.org/>

Ocean Wildlife and Habitat Rescue
14726 97th Rd. N.
West Palm Beach, FL 33412

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