

# Nonnative Reptiles in South Florida Identification Guide



- The nonnative reptiles shown here are native to Central and South America, Asia, and Africa. They were introduced to south Florida by human activity.
- **Invasive species** harm native species through direct predation, competition for resources, spread of disease, and disruption of natural ecosystems. Many of the nonnative reptiles on this guide are, or have the potential to become, invasive.
- Use this guide to identify invasive species and immediately **report sightings of the black and white tegu, Nile monitor, and all invasive snakes to 1-888-IVE-GOT1**. Take a photo and note the location relative to street intersections or with a GPS if possible.
- More photos can be found at [www.flmnh.ufl.edu/herpetology/herpetology.htm](http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/herpetology/herpetology.htm).
- **Be certain** that an animal is a nonnative species before removing it. **Warning—most reptiles will bite or scratch if provoked.**

Nonnative species are sometimes confused with the Florida natives shown because their colorations and patterns are very similar. Pay attention to the distinct characteristics and typical adult sizes listed on this guide to avoid confusion when you encounter these animals.

## Nonnative Lizards



**Green Iguana** 4 to 6 ft.  
Vibrant shades of green become dull with age. Males have larger spikes along back.



**Black Spinytail Iguana** 2 to 4 ft.  
Gray to tan body with well-defined black bands



**Black and White Tegu** 2 to 3 ft.  
Dark bands with plentiful white dots between them



**Brown Anole** 5 to 9 in.  
Yellowish-tan to dark brown; red dewlap with yellow border



**Cuban Knight Anole** 13 to 19.5 in.  
Changes from bright green to brown; yellow facial band



**Northern Curly-Tailed Lizard** 7 to 10.5 in.  
Gray to tan with curled tail



**Nile Monitor** 4 to 6 ft. Brown/yellow body bands; forked black/blue tongue; long sharp claws

## NATIVE Look-a-Likes



**Green Anole** 5 to 8 in.  
Can change color to brown; pinkish dewlap (throat fan)



**Eastern Fence Lizard** 3.5 to 7.5 in.



**Florida Scrub Lizard** 3.5 to 5.5 in.



**American Alligator** 6 to 9 ft. (juvenile pictured)

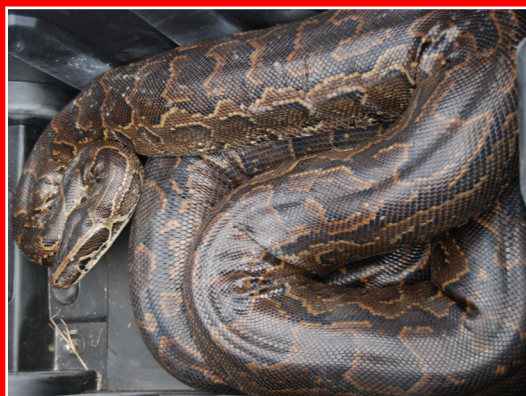
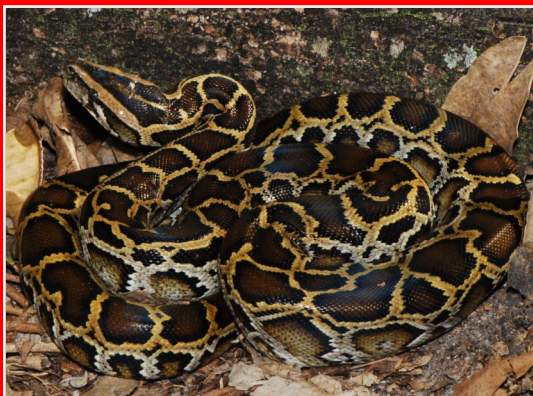


# Nonnative Snakes

## Burmese Python

10 to 12 ft.

Tan body with dark blotches that do not touch; dark and light wedges beneath the eye



## African Python

10 to 12 ft.

Tan to grey body with irregular dark spots; dark and light wedges beneath the eye

## Reticulated Python

14 to 18 ft.

Distinct reddish eyes; tan body with dark brown net-like markings with yellow and white accents



## Ball Python

2 to 4 ft.

Large brownish spots outlined in light cream color against a dark brown or black body



## Boa Constrictor

6 to 9 ft.

Tan oval spots; reddish-brown tail

## Green Anaconda

13 to 15 ft.

Green body; large, round, dark spots; eye stripes

## Yellow Anaconda

6 to 9 ft.

Yellow body; large, dark spots; five dark stripes on top of head

Report sightings of the nonnative snakes shown above to [www.IveGot1.org](http://www.IveGot1.org) or 1-888-IVE-GOT1 (1-888-483-4681)

## Sometimes confused with these NATIVE snakes:



## Eastern Indigo Snake

5 to 6 ft.

**Endangered species**



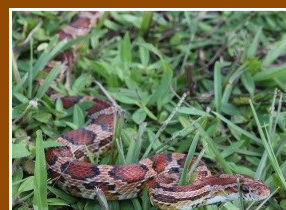
## Brown Watersnake

3.5 to 4.5 ft.



## Eastern Diamond-back Rattlesnake

3 to 5 ft. **Venomous**



## Corn Snake

1.5 to 3.5 ft.



## Cottonmouth

2.5 to 3 ft.

**Venomous**

Note that invasive snakes are much heavier-bodied than most natives and always have smooth, shiny scales. Cottonmouths and rattlesnakes have a more distinctly triangular head than the invasive snakes.

All photos are property of University of Florida unless otherwise noted.



This document is WEC291, one of a series of the Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation, UF/IFAS Extension. First published: September 2010. Revised January 2014. Reviewed June 2017. Please visit the EDIS Web site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

Authors: Laura M. Early, intern; Christy A. Harry, intern; Rebecca G. Harvey, environmental education coordinator; and Frank J. Mazzotti, associate professor; UF/IFAS Fort Lauderdale Research and Education Center.

---

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is an Equal Opportunity Institution authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function with non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations. For more information on obtaining other extension publications, contact your county Cooperative Extension service.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Florida, IFAS, Florida A. & M. University Cooperative Extension Program, and Boards of County Commissioners Cooperating. Millie Ferrer-Chancy, Interim Dean.

## **Copyright Information**

This document is copyrighted by the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) for the people of the State of Florida. UF/IFAS retains all rights under all conventions, but permits free reproduction by all agents and offices of the Cooperative Extension Service and the people of the State of Florida. Permission is granted to others to use these materials in part or in full for educational purposes, provided that full credit is given to the UF/IFAS, citing the publication, its source, and date of publication.