

Living With Alligators



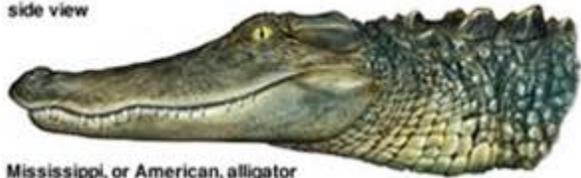
April 6, 2017
Ofc. Andrew Polaszek



Facts:

* The American Alligator is classified by the USFWS as similar in appearance to a threatened taxon (American Crocodile). This allows for state-approved management and control programs.

side view



Mississippi, or American, alligator
(*Alligator mississippiensis*)

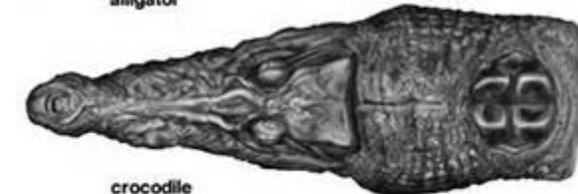


estuarine, or saltwater, crocodile
(*Crocodylus porosus*)

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alligator



crocodile

Alligator/Crocodile Distribution



Historic range of the American crocodile in Florida

Range of the American Alligator
(*Alligator mississippiensis*)



Size

- Females rarely exceed 10' in length, but males grow much larger
- The Florida state record for length was a 14' 3 ½" male from Brevard County
- The Florida state record for weight was an alligator captured in Alachua County that weighed 1,043 lbs.
- The largest alligator ever caught, a world record, can now be viewed in an Alabama museum. It measured 15'9" and weighed 1,011.5 pounds.

Largest alligator ever caught



Reproduction

- Nearly all alligators reach sexual maturity by the time they reach 7' in length, although females can reach sexual maturity by the time they reach 6' in length.
- In males, it may take 8-12 years to reach sexual maturity and 10-15 years for females
- Courtship begins in early April, with mating occurring in May or June.
- Females build a mound nest of soil, vegetation or debris and deposit an average of 32-46 eggs in late June or early July.

Nest and eggs



Hatchlings

- Incubation requires approximately 63-68 days and hatching occurs from mid-August through early September



Survival

- *1/3 of alligator nests are destroyed by predators, mainly raccoons, or flooding.
- *The average clutch of an alligator nest is 38.
- *It is estimated that of those 38, 24 hatchlings will emerge.
- *It is estimated that of those 24, only 10 hatchlings will live to one year.
- *It is estimated that of those 10, 8 will become sub-adults (reach 4' in length)
- *Ultimately, of those 8, 5 will reach maturity (reach 6' in length)

Pictures of alligator egg predators



Thermoregulation

- *Alligators are ectothermic-they rely on external sources of heat to regulate their body temperature
- *To control body temperature, alligators bask in the sun or move to areas with warmer or cooler air or water temperature



*Most alligators are active when the temperature is between 82 and 92 degrees F.

*Alligators stop feeding when the ambient temperature drops below 70 degrees F and become dormant at below 55 degrees F.

Laws

- 68A-25.001 Feeding or Enticement-No person shall intentionally feed, or entice with feed, any crocodilian unless held in captivity under permit issued by the FL FWC.

*Illegal to take, possess, harvest, etc. EXEMPTIONS:

Licensed alligator trappers/hunters and their agents, alligator farmers, alligator processors and those with alligator egg collection permits

*Alligator feet, viscera and skeletal parts may be bought, sold, possessed, transported and imported without a permit

Laws continued

- 68A-25.003 Taking and Disposal of Nuisance Alligators-only persons under contract with the FL FWC as nuisance trappers or their agents and assistants shall take, possess and kill nuisance alligators.
- SNAP-Statewide Nuisance Alligator Program
- 1-866-FWC-GATOR (392-4286)
- Administered by the Division of Hunting and Game Management
- Uses contracted nuisance alligator trappers and issues permits for removal if the nuisance alligator meets the criteria for removal

SNAP

*For removal, the alligator must be at least 4' in length and pose a threat to people, pets, etc.

*The complainant must be able to grant legal access to the property on which the nuisance alligator is located.

*In 2015, SNAP received 13, 962 nuisance alligator complaints statewide, resulting in the removal of 7, 513 nuisance alligators.



Safety Tips

- Be aware of the possibility of alligator attacks when in or near fresh or brackish waterbodies. Attacks may occur when people do not pay close enough attention to their surroundings when working or recreating near water.
- Closely supervise children when they are playing in or around water. Never allow small children to play unsupervised near water.
- Do not swim outside of posted swimming areas or in waters that might be inhabited by large alligators.
- Alligators are most active between dusk and dawn. Therefore, swim only during daylight hours.

- Dispose of fish scraps in garbage cans at boat ramps and fish camps. Do not throw them in the water. Although you are not intentionally feeding alligators when you do this, the end result can be the same.
- Do not allow pets to swim, exercise or drink in or near waters that may contain alligators. Dogs are more susceptible to being targeted than people because dogs resemble the natural prey of alligators. Alligators are opportunistic feeders.
- Observe and photograph alligators only from a distance.
- Seek immediate medical attention if bitten by an alligator and report the bite to the FL FWC. An investigation will need to be conducted.

Contact the FWC

*If you suspect a fish, wildlife, boating or environmental law violation, report it to the FL FWC at [888-404-3922](tel:888-404-3922) or cell phone by dialing *FWC or #FWC, depending on your service provider.

*You may also report violations online at www.myfwc.com or text to Tip@MyFWC.com

*If the information you provide results in an arrest, you may be eligible for a reward of up to \$1,000. You may also remain anonymous.

Questions?????

