

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.
- **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



Bjorn Lardener, Colorado State University



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 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.



Corn Snake
1.5 to 3.5 ft.



Cottonmouth
2.5 to 3 ft.

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.

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