

Regional Assessment of Priority Species and Control Efforts



ECISMA Summit - July 12th, 2016

**Sarah Funck, Nonnative Fish and Wildlife Program
Coordinator**

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

2016 Python Challenge™

January 16 – February 14



- Increase the effectiveness of the public by providing training and education
- Educate the public about Burmese pythons to help limit the impact of this and other invasive species



Python Challenge™ participant and new Python Removal Permit holder Clark Glenn at an In-person training



2016 Python Challenge™ Components

- Python removal contest
- Social media components
- Extensive online and in-person training opportunities
- Invasive Species Awareness Festival
- 2016 Python Challenge™ Awards Ceremony



Python Challenge™ team Swamp Apes



2016 Python Challenge™

By the Numbers



- 106 Pythons removed statewide
- 1,066 Registered Participants
- 47 In-person trainings with 510 participants
- State, national and international news coverage
- Facebook posts reached public over 185,000 times
- 897 photo contest submissions, over 1,500 votes



In-person training, Fort Myers



2016 Python Challenge™

Python Removal Contest

Results



		<i>Team</i>	<i>Individual</i>
Most Pythons Removed	Grand Prize	33 Pythons \$5,000	13 Pythons \$3,500
	2nd Prize	9 Pythons \$1,500	8 Pythons \$750
Longest Python Removed	Grand Prize	15 ft. \$3000	13.87 ft. \$1,500
	2nd Prize	14.9 ft. \$1500	13.77 ft. \$750



2016 Python Challenge™ Grand Prize Winners Dusty Crum, Daniel Moniz and Bill Booth with commemorative Pro Tool



2016 Python Challenge™ Success!



- Better trained participants
- Favorable weather
- Additional areas open to the public



Nonnative Fish and Wildlife

Other Projects

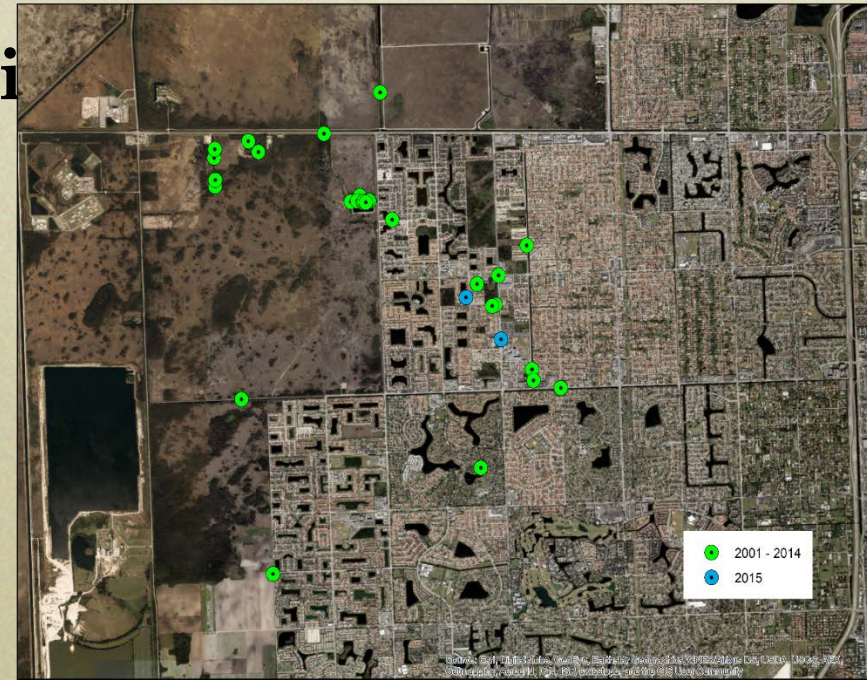
- Northern African Python Eradication Effort
- Argentine Black and White Tegu Assessment and Management
- Nile Monitor Eradication Effort
- Nonnative Freshwater Fish Assessments and Monitoring



Nonnative Fish and Wildlife

Northern African Python

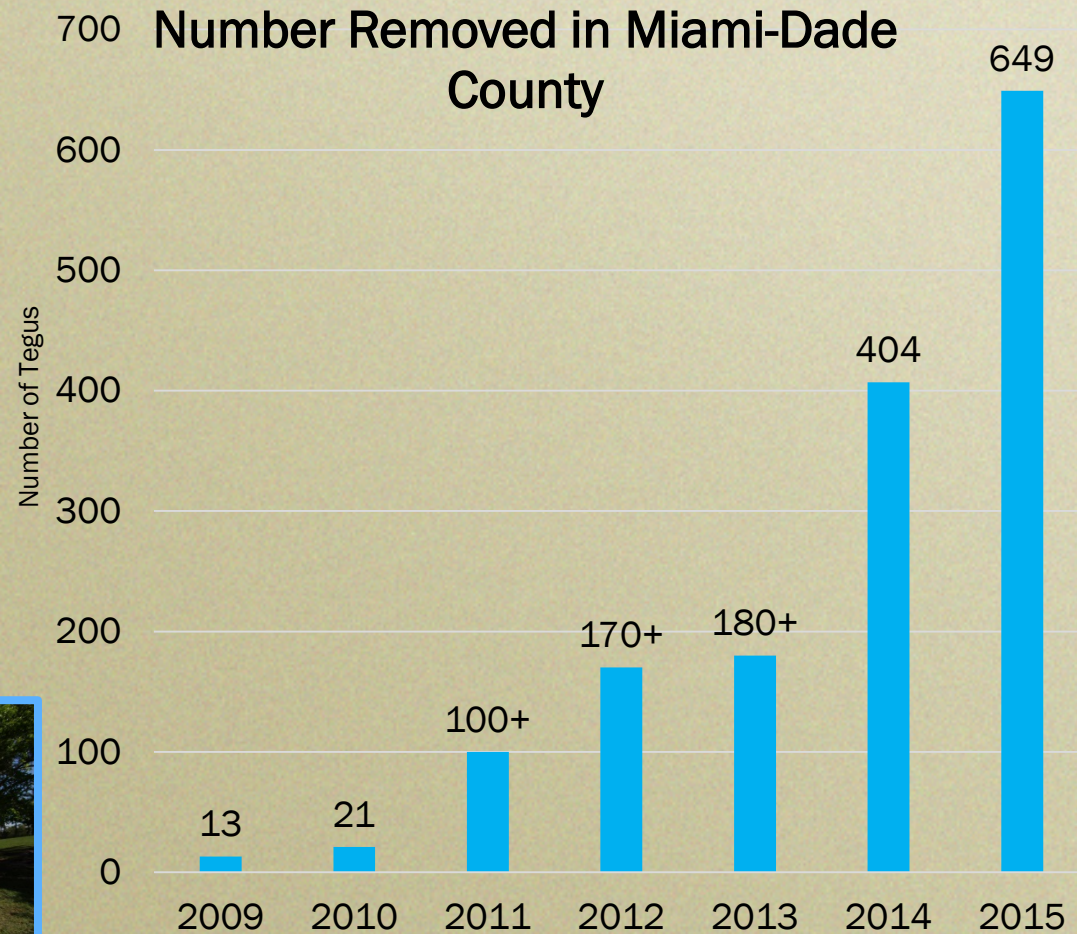
- To date, just over 30 removed
- FWC and partners conducted 57 surveys during FY1516
- UF conducted 195 surveys
 - 111 daytime road cruise
 - 75 daytime visual encounter
 - 9 night road cruise
- Two NAP removed outside formal survey efforts:
 - July 25, 2015 – Kendall community DOR
 - August 20, 2015 – Removed by MD Venom Unit



Nonnative Fish and Wildlife Argentine Black and White Tegus



- Continued trapping and research efforts by FWC and many partners
- FWC removed 42 tegus this active season
 - Natural areas = 10
 - Urban areas = 32
- Partners at FPL have begun trapping (4 removed)

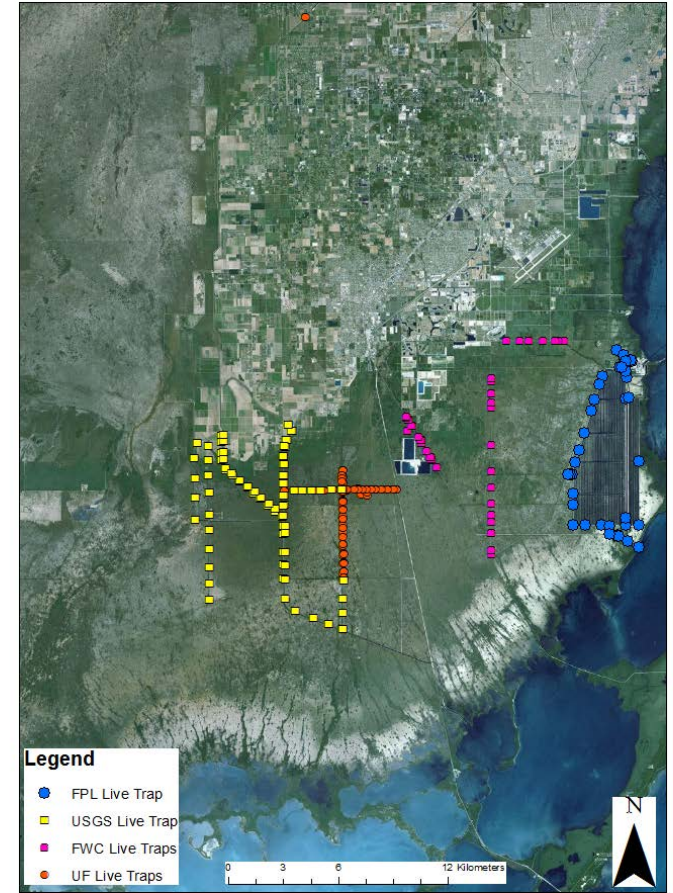
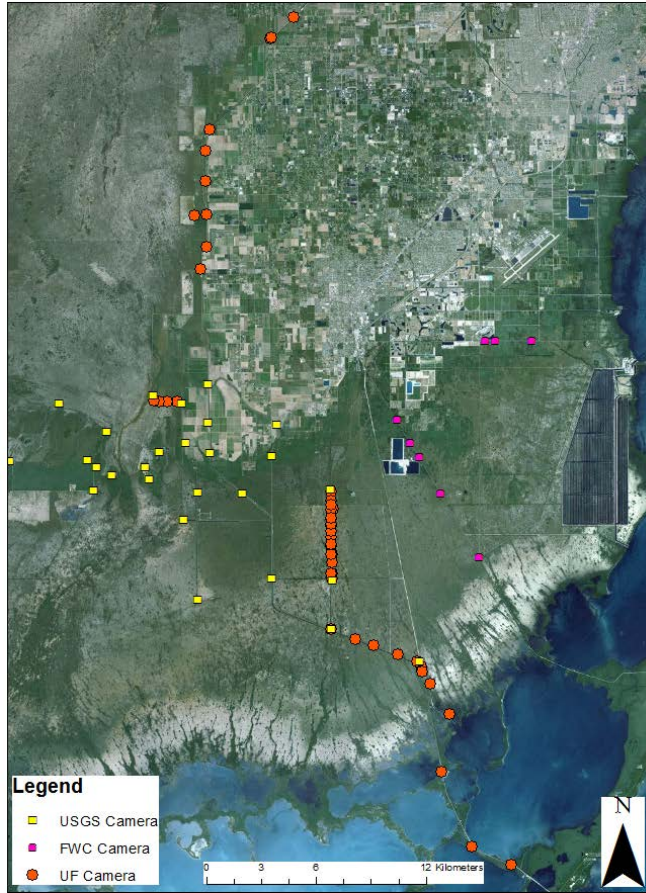


Nonnative Fish and Wildlife Argentine Black and White Tegus



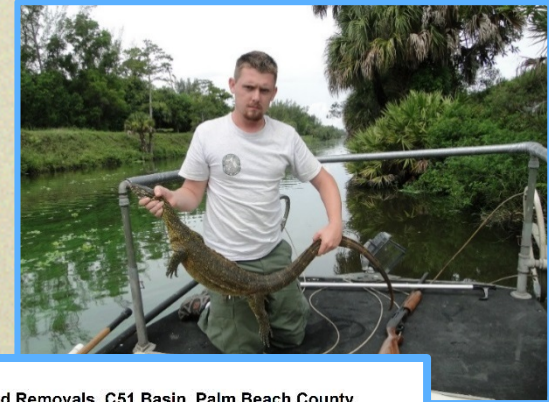
Nonnative Fish and Wildlife

Argentine Black and White Tegus

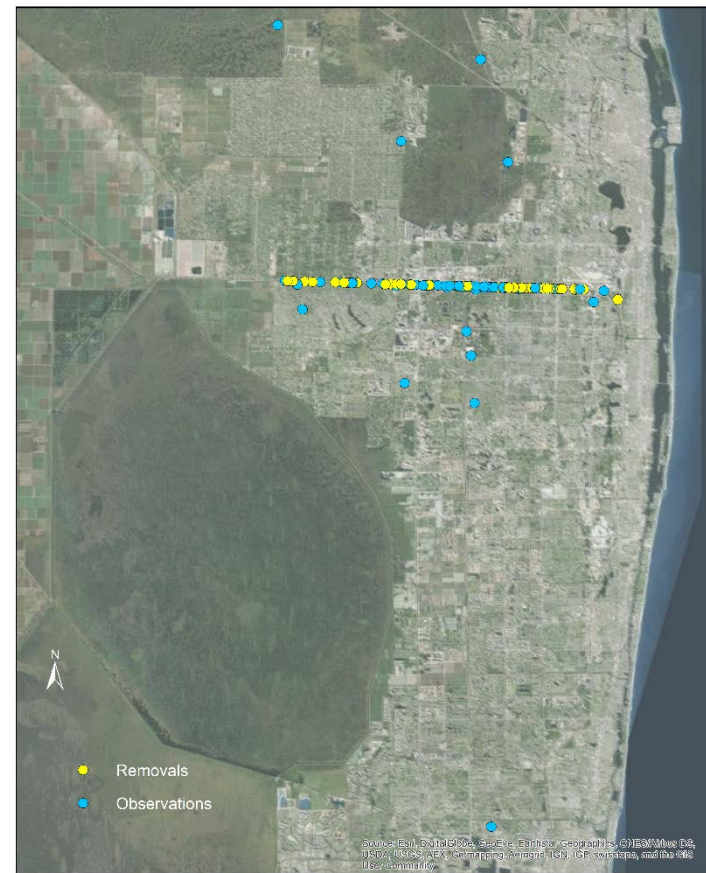


Nonnative Fish and Wildlife Nile Monitors

- Nile monitor workshop held at Loxahatchee NWR on April 6, 2016
- FWC is monitoring canals in Palm Beach County
 - 14 removals
 - EDRR in Deerfield Beach and West Palm Beach
- UF efforts in Southwest Ranches: targeted outreach and 1 removal
- FWC plans to expand survey and removal efforts for Nile monitors



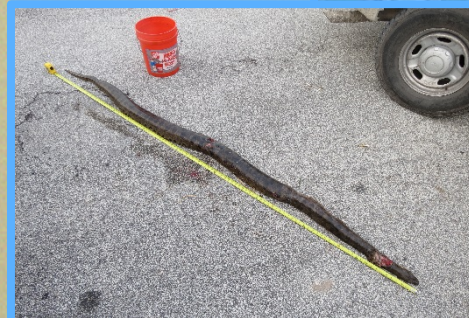
Nile Monitors Observations and Removals, C51 Basin, Palm Beach County



Nonnative Fish and Wildlife

Green Anacondas

- No formal surveys for Green Anacondas
- Two anacondas reported and removed by FWC Law Enforcement
 - First removed November 31, 2015; SR50 and St. Johns River (Orange County)
 - Second removed February 1, 2016; Melbourne (Brevard County)
- UF necropsied one individual that contained a feeder rat



Lionfish Removal Incentives for 2016

Goals

- Remove 25,000 lionfish statewide from May 2016 to May 2017
- Encourage further public involvement in lionfish removal efforts
- Reward the most successful lionfish hunters around the state

Two-part approach

1. Statewide outreach and reward program
2. Lionfish removal pilot program in the Panhandle



Part 1: Statewide Initiative

- Membership in a reward program for harvesting 50 qualifying lionfish
- Emailed photo or “checked in”

All participants who harvest 50 lionfish get:

- Commemorative coin
- Event T-shirt
- Entry in FWC Lionfish Hall of Fame website
- If before July 27th – extra lobster during mini-season

Also get entered into drawing – 1 drawing per 50 lionfish qualified

- Fishing licenses
- Lionfish gear (pole spears, zookeepers, tank refills, etc.)
- Fuel cards



Part 1: Crowning Florida's Lionfish King/Queen

To promote continued lionfish removal throughout the summer, FWC will host a summer-long contest (May 14 – Sept. 30)

- The person who “checks in” the most lionfish between the LRAD kick-off and the end of Sept.
- Prizes
 - Lifetime Saltwater Fishing License
 - Featured photo on cover of FWC's January 2017 saltwater regulations
 - Biography featured in FWC's Lionfish Hall of Fame

*Would be recognized at Nov. 2016
Commission meeting*



Nonnative Fish and Wildlife

Future Directions

- Employ 7 New OPS Staff
- Establish FWC NNFWP Presence in SWFL
- Fund Various Research Contracts
- Implement Python Removal Incentives Program
- Expand Responder Network and Outreach Capabilities



Mexican Red Bellied Squirrel (*Sciurus aureogaster*) Biscayne National Park



Tony Pernas (Big Cypress National Preserve)

2016 Results



- April 18-29th Systematic Nest Survey (3,000 acres)
- 11 MRBS
 - 6 Male/5 female
 - 6 melanistic/5 regular