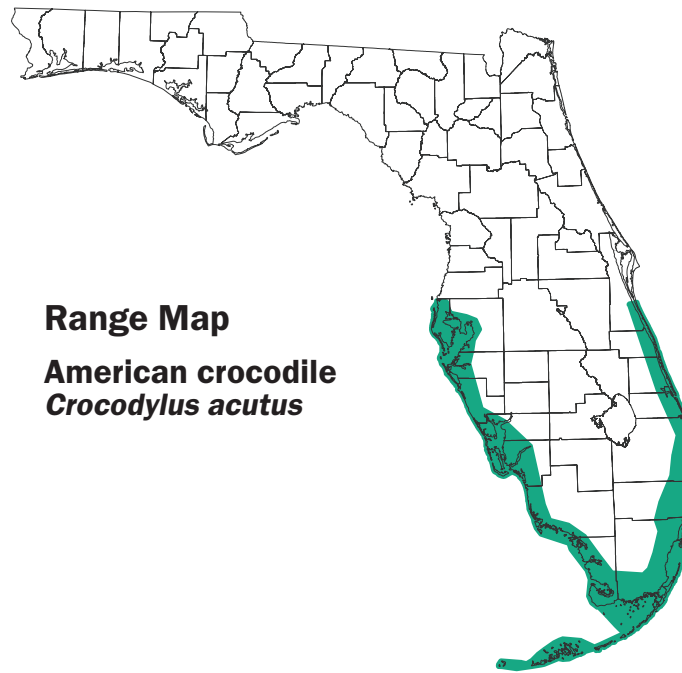


A Guide to Living with Crocodiles



Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission
MyFWC.com



Range Map

American crocodile
Crocodylus acutus

A Conservation Success Story

The Florida population of the American crocodile is a conservation success story. Listed as an endangered species in 1975, crocodile numbers have since recovered from a few hundred individuals to as many as 2,000 adult crocodiles today. The Florida population of this native species is now classified as threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

While American crocodiles are found in Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean, Florida is the only place in the United States where people can see them in the wild.

If you're concerned about a crocodile,
call the FWC's toll-free
Nuisance Alligator Hotline at
866-FWC-GATOR (866-392-4286).
We will work with you to resolve the
situation.

Safety Tips

- Keep a safe distance if you see a crocodile.
- Keep pets on a leash and small children away from the water's edge, especially during nighttime hours, to avoid cases of mistaken identity. Pets often resemble crocodiles' natural prey.
- Swim only in designated swimming areas during daylight hours and without your pet. Crocodiles are most active between dusk and dawn.
- Never feed a crocodile – it is illegal and dangerous. When fed, crocodiles can lose their natural wariness of people and instead learn to associate people with the availability of food. This includes indirect feeding, which can happen when feeding other wildlife or when improperly disposing of fish scraps.





Crocodiles often sun with their mouths open. This behavior is called “gaping” and helps crocodiles regulate their body temperature. It is not a sign of aggression.

Living with Crocodiles

Conflicts between American crocodiles and people are extremely rare in Florida due to their relatively small population numbers and wariness of people.

Crocodile sightings have increased in recent years for many reasons. The crocodile population in Florida is increasing as a result of their population recovery, being seen in locations that they haven’t been to in decades, along with the growing number of people spending time on or near Florida’s waters.

As an imperiled species continuing to recover, American crocodiles must be managed responsibly by balancing the primary consideration of public safety with the recovery needs of crocodiles.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where can crocodiles be found in Florida?

Crocodiles can be found in south Florida and the Keys. They live in brackish or saltwater areas and inhabit ponds, coves, and creeks in mangrove swamps. They are occasionally found inland in freshwater areas of the southeast Florida coast as a result of the extensive canal system.

What should I do if I see someone feeding a crocodile?

Call our Wildlife Alert Hotline at **888-404-FWCC** (888-404-3922). Callers can remain anonymous.

What are the main differences between alligators and crocodiles?

Alligators have a rounded, “U”-shaped snout and typically only have visible top teeth when their jaws are shut. Crocodiles have a narrow, “V”-shaped snout and typically have visible top and bottom teeth when their jaws are shut.



Crocodile

Alligator



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866-FWC-GATOR
(866-392-4286).



[MyFWC.com/Crocodile](https://myfwc.com/crocodile)

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