Dealing with Invasive Wildlife in Florida: A role for Master Gardeners

*Florida Master Gardener Program*
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Definitions

*Nonindigenous species*: plants, animals, or microbes occurring outside of their native range—no negative or unwanted impacts

(e.g., *alien, introduced, exotic, non-native*)

*Invasive species*: plants, animals, or microbes occurring outside of their native range that have negative impacts on the economy, ecology, or quality of human life in their introduced range
Problems caused by invasive species

- **Ecological**
  - Pathogens/disease
  - Predation
  - Competition
  - Major habitat modification
  - Hybridization

- **Economical**
  - Damage
  - Control

- **Quality of life**
  - Harm to people/pets
  - Nuisance
  - Disease vectors

Feral hogs damage native habitats!

Hydrilla shades out benthic plants

Fire ant stings are painful!
Some examples

Brazilian Pepper
Some examples

Air Potato
Some examples

Black Rat
Some examples

European Starling
Some examples

Brown Tree Snake
Some examples

Burmese Python
Some examples

Nile Monitor Lizard
Some examples

Cuban Treefrog
How You Can Help!

- Stay Educated
- Become a Citizen Scientist
- Join our Early Detection network
Invader Updater

• Quarterly eNewsletter (and webpage) with information on invasive vertebrate wildlife in the southeastern U.S. and beyond:
  – Important Dates
  – Focal Species
  – Science
  – News to Know
  – Legislation
  – Innovation
  – Noteworthy
  – Resources

http://ufwildlife.ifas.ufl.edu/InvaderUpdater.shtml

Email monicaem@ufl.edu to be added to the list...
CTF Citizen Scientist Program

- Monitor CTFs in your yard
- Euthanize CTFs to benefit native species
- Report your findings to UF

For more information http://ufwildlife.ifas.ufl.edu/citizen_sci.shtml
Get REDDy

- Join a growing statewide network
- Observe and report large, invasive reptiles
- Training is free, online
- We NEED your help!!!
REDDy Training Format

• **Safety** First / Introduction to Observing
• **Scan** Possible Habitats
• **Spot** Non-native Reptiles & Collect Data
• **Submit** a Detailed Report (Hotline vs. EDDMapS)
  – Who
  – What
  – When
  – Where
REDDy...Sneak Preview
REDDy Observers

1-888-IVE-GOT1
www.IveGot1.org
Additional Resources

Webpage: http://ufwildlife.ifas.ufl.edu/reddy.shtml
• Printable resources
• Information links
• YouTube videos
• Reporting links
REDDy Training Hosted by...
http://eces.ifas.ufl.edu

1. Log in (UF) or register

2. View courses under Wildlife Ecology topic (scroll down)

3. Select REDDy course (3 parts)
   - Training module
   - Quiz
   - Feedback survey
Last words...

• REDDy and Citizen Scientist information available here today—get a card
• A shameless plug of potential interest