

Everyone has their reasons. See what they are and join the movement at [toyota.com/hybrids](http://toyota.com/hybrids) Prius Highlander Hybrid Camry Hybrid

TOYOTA | moving forward ▶

HYBRID SYNERGY DRIVE

join the community

Web MSNBC

Search

Make MSNBC Your Homepage | MSN Home | Hotmail | Sign In



MSNBC Home >> U.S. News >> Environment

Sponsored by



SPONSORED LI

# Alligators might lose protected status in Florida

## Homeowners would get to kill them, hunting season would get longer

MSNBC News Services  
Updated: 4:49 a.m. PT Nov 2, 2006

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. - Florida wildlife officials are considering removing alligators from a list of protected species and letting homeowners deal with nuisance gators themselves.

Officials estimate the state has as many as 2 million alligators.

The changes would downgrade gators from a species of special concern to a game animal within five years and then remove them altogether from the state's list of imperiled animals.

[Story continues below ↓](#)

advertisement

Everyone has their reasons. See what they are and join the movement at [toyota.com/hybrids](http://toyota.com/hybrids)

Prius  
Highlander Hybrid  
Camry Hybrid

TOYOTA | moving forward ▶

HYBRID SYNERGY DRIVE



Victor R. Caivano / AP

This alligator was spotted at the northeast boundary of the Everglades National Park near Miami, Fla. But others have been found in more urban areas, and their rebounding populations has officials considering loosening protections.

**Mortgage R: 39-Yr Lows**  
\$300K loan for \$999/mo. Think much? See [www.lowermyb](http://www.lowermyb)

**Stock Market Investing at \$7** online stock market research screeners & [www.scottrade](http://www.scottrade)

**Savings, Cr Cards, Loan**  
Capital One Nc financial service One - apply now [www.capitalone](http://www.capitalone)

**Refinance T 3.99%**  
\$250,000 mortg \$833/month. G quotes. Bad cre [www.Refinance](http://www.Refinance)

**Free 50K Pr Account - F**  
Try forex tradin for 30 days. Re charts, research [www.forex.com](http://www.forex.com)

[Get liste](#)

- U.S. News**
- Crime & Punishment
- U.S. Life
- U.S. Security
- Education
- Environment
- Race in America
- Only on MSNBC.com
- WP.com Highlights
- Peculiar Postings
- Video**
- U.S. News**
- Politics**
- World News**
- Business**
- Sports**
- Entertainment**
- Tech / Science**
- Health**
- Weather**
- Travel**
- Blogs Etc.**
- Local News**
- Newsweek**
- Multimedia**
- Most Popular**
- NBC NEWS**
- MSNBC TV**
- Today Show**
- Nightly News**
- Meet the Press**
- Dateline NBC**

• **Disable Fly-out**

**MSNBC Classifieds**

**Shopping**

**Dating**  
with Perfectmatch.com

**Real Estate**  
with HomePages.com

**Jobs**

**Autos**

Advertisement

**MSN SHOPPING**

That could lift restrictions that now make it illegal for homeowners to kill nuisance alligators on their property. Currently, they must contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, which contracts with a trapper to remove the gator.

More alligators also could be killed over an extended period if the changes are approved. Under the current protections, each hunter is allowed only two gator kills per permit during a 10-week hunting season.

The proposed changes will be considered at

### ENVIRONMENT SLIDE SHOW

#### • 'Species factories'

An expedition to the South Pacific island of New Guinea found "species factories" for fish, shrimp and coral. Click on the image for a sampling.



Conservation.org

- Ship graveyards
- Parks in peril
- Africa's appetite
- Red Listed: Species at risk
- Fate sealed?
- Tug of war over pollutants



**Best sellers**

- Fiction
- Nonfiction
- Popular titles
- Oprah's picks

**RESOURCE GUIDE**

- Dating with Perfectmatch.com
- Find your dream home today!
- Shopping

commission's December meeting.

**Dangerous situations?**

Palm Beach County trapper Rick Kramer said removing those restrictions could mean trouble for people who aren't professionals.

"I think it's going to cause some dangerous situations," Kramer said.

Alligators were once thought to be on the brink of extinction after years of over-hunting. They were listed as endangered species in 1967 but removed from the federal list 20 years later. In Florida, they remained under state protection.

Biologists believe there is now about one alligator for every nine humans living in Florida.

State alligator coordinator Harry Dutton said Tuesday the potential changes have nothing to do with the three fatal alligator attacks that occurred in one month earlier this year.

"I wish the three fatalities didn't happen, and if they didn't, this would still be going on. It's just a timely thing to do," he said.

In fact, deadly alligator encounters are rare. Before the May attacks, just 18 fatal attacks had been reported since 1948 by alligators, an evolutionary survivalist that has barely changed in 65 million years.

**'Part one' of long process**

Dutton cautioned that the proposed rules would not result in an immediate open season on a creature coveted by chefs and shoemakers.

Instead, it represents the first comprehensive review of Florida's alligator policy in 20 years.

"We're in part one of a many part process," Dutton said.

Under current rules, alligator farmers can cull 4,000 alligators from their stocks per year.

Professional trappers catch about 8,000 more that threaten people, pets or livestock. Hunters each take about 8,000 more.

*The Associated Press and Reuters contributed to this report.*

**Rate this story**   **Low**                      **High**

Current rating: **3.5** by **179** users   • **View Top Rated stories**



Print this



Email this



IM this

**MORE FROM ENVIRONMENT**

**Next** →

- U.N.: 2005 set record for greenhouse gases
- So long seafood? Experts warn of disaster
- More rare rhinos killed by poachers
- 100 horses in flood waters rescued

- Inside the 'Garden of Eden'
- Coastal changes
- The other Hawaii

**MESSAGE BOARDS**

- **Share your thoughts on green issues, technology**

**MOST POPULAR**

**Most Viewed**   • Top Rated   • Most E-mailed

- Pastor: Haggard admits to 'some' allegations
- What do you think of the political TV ads?
- McDreamy gets a McSister on 'Grey's Anatomy'
- Sharon deteriorates, taken to intensive care
- Poll: Britons warier of Bush than Kim Jong Il
- **Most viewed on MSNBC.com**

## TOP MSNBC STORIES

- Evangelist quits after sex allegation
- U.S. pulls site said to reveal nuke info
- WP: Campaigns set for TV finale
- 56 bodies found around Baghdad
- Web cameras show Mexico border activity

## MSNBC TV HIGHLIGHTS

- Olbermann: Bush owes apology, not Kerry
- 'Worst Person': Tom DeLay
- Scarborough: What's wrong with Kerry?
- 'Worst': Diebold, e-voting maker
- Return of 'Sex and the City?'

advertisement

---

## SPONSORED LINKS

[Get listed here](#)

**Mortgage Rates Near 39-Yr Lows**

\$300K loan for under \$999/mo. Think you pay too much? See new payment.  
[www.lowermybills.com](http://www.lowermybills.com)

**Stock Market Investing at Scottrade**

\$7 online stock trades. Free market research, stock screeners & more  
[www.scottrade.com](http://www.scottrade.com)

**Savings, Credit Cards, Loans**

Capital One No Hassle financial services Select One - apply now!  
[www.capitalone.com](http://www.capitalone.com)

**Refinance Today 3.99%**

\$250,000 mortgage for \$833/month. Get 4 free quotes. Bad credit ok!  
[www.RefinanceSave.com](http://www.RefinanceSave.com)

**Free 50K Practice Account - Forex.com**

Try forex trading risk-free for 30 days. Real time charts, research.  
[www.forex.com](http://www.forex.com)

[Cover](#) | [U.S. News](#) | [Politics](#) | [World News](#) | [Business](#) | [Sports](#) | [Tech/Science](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Travel](#) | [Health](#) | [Blogs Etc.](#) | [Weather](#) | [Local News](#)  
[Newsweek](#) | [Today Show](#) | [Nightly News](#) | [Dateline NBC](#) | [Meet the Press](#) | [MSNBC TV](#)

[About MSNBC.com](#) | [Alerts](#) | [Newsletters](#) | [RSS](#) | [Podcasts](#) | [Help](#) | [News Tools](#) | [Jobs at MSNBC.com](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Terms & Conditions](#) | [Privacy](#)

© 2006 MSNBC.com