



## News Release

### **SFWMD, FWC Hunters Remove Record Breaking Invasive Python from the Everglades**

*Record breaking 18 foot 9 inch Burmese python eliminated. This is the latest milestone in ongoing effort expanded by Gov. DeSantis to protect Everglades*

*Python elimination hunters Kevin Pavlidis (left) and Ryan Ausburn (right) hold their record breaking 18 foot 9 inch python eliminated as part of SFWMD and FWC's python elimination program.*

Python removal agents working for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) recently broke the record for the longest Burmese python eliminated in Florida.

Working together as part of the joint python elimination program under the direction of Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, Ryan Ausburn and Kevin Pavlidis removed the 18 foot, 9 inch snake on Oct. 2 along the L-28 Tieback Canal about 35 miles west of Miami. This beats the state's previous record of 18 feet, 8 inches from 2013.

So far, hunters for the expanded program run by the two agencies have removed more than 5,000 invasive pythons from South Florida's Everglades ecosystem.

"Under Governor DeSantis, the South Florida Water Management District and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission expanded our python removal efforts. Today's record breaking capture shows that our

increased efforts are working to get harmful pythons out of the precious Everglades ecosystem,” said **SFWMD Governing Board Member “Alligator Ron” Bergeron**. “Together with our partners and the public’s help, we can restore the Everglades and combat the harmful pythons that hurt Florida’s native wildlife.”

“The removal of this behemoth Burmese python is a triumph for our native wildlife and habitats,” said **FWC Commissioner Rodney Barreto**. “It’s a great example of the partnership between the FWC and the South Florida Water Management District, working under the leadership of Gov. Ron DeSantis, toward our goal of removing these nonnative predators.”

The public can help control nonnative invasive wildlife by reporting sightings to the FWC’s Exotic Species Hotline at 888-IveGot1 (888-483-4681), online at [IveGot1.org](http://IveGot1.org) or by using the free smartphone app IVEGOT1. If possible, take a picture and note the exact location of the sighting. Python Action Team and Python Elimination Program members respond to reports of large constrictors and other priority species to remove these harmful invaders from the wild.

Burmese pythons became established in Florida as a result of escaped or released pets. It is illegal to release nonnative species into the wild and can negatively impact Florida’s native wildlife and habitat. Don’t let it loose! The FWC’s Exotic Pet Amnesty Program allows pet owners to surrender nonnative or exotic pets without penalty. Visit [MyFWC.com/PetAmnesty](http://MyFWC.com/PetAmnesty) for more information.

To learn more about the FWC’s Python Action Team and the SFWMD’s Python Elimination Program, visit [MyFWC.com/Python](http://MyFWC.com/Python) and [SFWMD.gov/Python](http://SFWMD.gov/Python).

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*The South Florida Water Management District is a regional governmental agency that manages the water resources in the southern part of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state’s five water management districts. Our mission is to safeguard and restore South Florida’s water*

*resources and ecosystems, protect our communities from flooding, and meet the region's water needs while connecting with the public and stakeholders.*

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