

Invasive Species Distribution Notes

Reproduction of the Burmese python (*Python molurus bivittatus*) in southern Florida

Kenneth L. Krysko^{1,5}, James C. Nifong¹, Ray W. Snow², Kevin M. Enge³,
Frank J. Mazzotti⁴

¹ Florida Museum of Natural History, Division of Herpetology, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida 32611, USA

² Everglades National Park, 40001 State Road 9336, Homestead, Florida 33034, USA

³ Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, 4005 South Main Street, Gainesville, Florida 32601, USA

⁴ Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation, University of Florida, Fort Lauderdale Research and Education Center, 3205 College Avenue, Davie, Florida 33314, USA

⁵ Corresponding author; e-mail: kenneyk@fmnh.ufl.edu

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Python molurus bivittatus is the largest exotic herpetofaunal species documented as being established in the United States. From 1995 through July 2005, 160 *P. m. bivittatus* were removed from Everglades National Park (ENP) and surrounding areas in southern Florida (Snow et al., 2007b). Although the first juvenile sized (82.5 cm Total Length, TL) *P. m. bivittatus* was found in December 1995, the first evidence of reproduction was not documented until the collection of four neonates (ca. 45 cm TL) in ENP in June 2002 (Snow et al., 2007b). Four gravid females containing 35-46 oviducal eggs were collected between 5 March and 26 April 2004 (Snow et al., 2007b), and a female was found coiled around 46 eggs of mean length 91.8 ± 6.5 mm (\pm SD) on 17 May 2006 (Snow et al., 2007a). We augment reproductive data in southern Florida for this exotic species, including the two largest recorded potential clutch sizes from Florida.

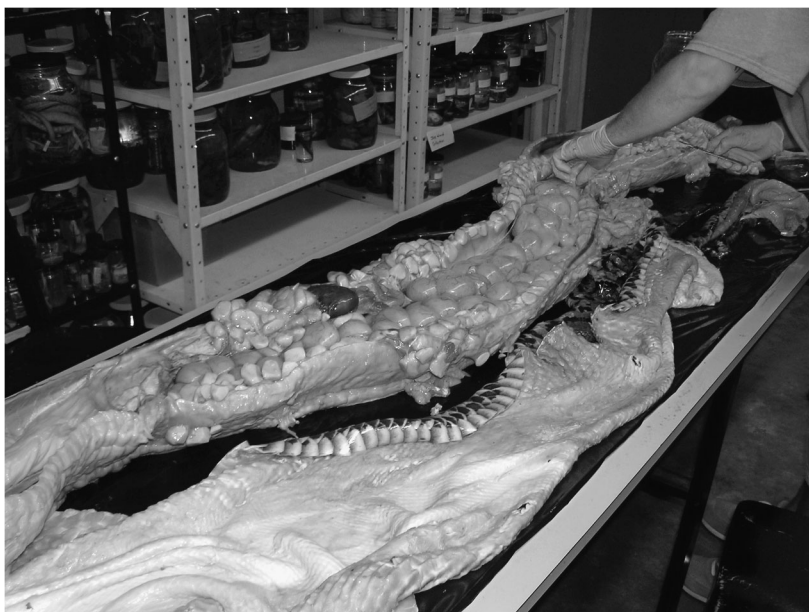


Figure 1. Dissected 487 cm TL *Python molurus bivattatus* (UF 146019) from Everglades National Park, Florida, that contained 79 oviducal eggs.

Three females (UF 147141, 147146 and 147150) measuring 298, 315 and 318 cm TL collected on 6 January, 28 February and 10 March 2005 contained 37, 21 and 29 oviducal eggs, respectively. The localities of these snakes are 25.389233N-80.683621W, 25.3954N-80.5933W and 25.760848N-80.76317W; Datum WGS84, respectively. A female (UF 146019) of 487 cm TL weighing 69 kg collected on 20 March 2005 (25.37391N-80.824139W) contained 5.4 kg fat bodies and 79 oviducal eggs (fig. 1); 46 in right oviduct, 33 in left oviduct, 75 of these eggs had a mean length of 52 ± 0.3 mm (\pm SE), range 45-58 mm. This represents the largest specimen captured from this introduced population, but not the largest potential clutch size documented. A female (UF 151398) measuring 471 cm TL and weighing 56.7 kg collected on 2 March 2007 (25.374925N-80.827457W) contained 7.1 kg fat bodies and 85 oviducal eggs 45-53 mm in diameter. Two nongravid adult females (UF 147144-45) 237-244 cm TL were collected on 18 January and 29 March 2005. Our findings fall within the 8-107 eggs reported as clutch sizes from its native range (Wall, 1921) and indicate that female *P. molurus bivattatus* are typically gravid in southern Florida from January through April.

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