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## **Invasive Animals**

Today on Gardening in a Minute: invasive animals.

Animals that have been introduced from other places and have a negative impact on Florida's native plants and animals are called invasive exotics.

Because invasive exotic animals have no natural predators in their new environment, they can multiply rapidly, causing serious imbalances in our natural ecosystems.

Some invasive animals were introduced to Florida deliberately. The marine toad was imported to control pests in sugarcane fields.

Other invasives have been released by unwitting Floridians who originally got them as pets. The giant Burmese python has become a problem in the Everglades.

Often, invasive exotic animals are introduced accidentally to the state. The Cuban treefrog probably came over in shipping crates from the Caribbean.

Other invasives include lizards, snails, eels, fish, and even some mammals.

For more information about invasive animals, contact your county Extension office or visit Gardening in a Minute dot com.

Gardening in a Minute is a production of the University of Florida's Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology, IFAS Extension, and WUFT-FM.

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