

US bans import of Burmese pythons

January 17 2012



A 2005 photo shows a 12-foot (3.65m) Burmese python that was captured in the backyard of a home in south Miami, Florida. The United States announced it is banning the import of Burmese pythons and three other species of giant constrictor snakes due to the danger they pose to local wildlife.

The United States announced Tuesday it is banning the import of Burmese pythons and three other species of giant constrictor snakes due to the danger they pose to local wildlife.

The formal ban on importing or transporting across state lines the [Burmese python](#), the yellow anaconda and the northern and southern African pythons will take effect in about two months, said the [Fish and Wildlife Service](#).

According to the decision, the four big snakes are considered "injurious wildlife" and the ban aims to halt their spread in the wild. People who own them as pets would not likely be affected by the new restrictions.

"Burmese pythons have already caused substantial harm in Florida," said FWS director Dan Ashe, noting that they have preyed on endangered Key Largo wood rats while other pythons have eaten endangered wood storks.

"By taking this action today, we will help prevent further harm from these large constrictor snakes to [native wildlife](#), especially in habitats that can support constrictor snake populations across the southern United States and in US territories."

US authorities have spent millions of dollars in the [Florida Everglades](#) due to the threat posed by the big snakes, "an amount far less than is needed to combat their spread," the FWS added.

Five other non-native snakes remain under consideration for listing as "injurious," including the reticulated python, boa constrictor, DeSchaunensee's anaconda, green anaconda and Beni anaconda.

The Burmese [pythons](#) are among the largest snakes on Earth and are native to southeast Asia, including Myanmar, also known as Burma.

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