

No more screwworm medications for Key deer as threat wanes

April 12 2017

Endangered deer in the Florida Keys are no longer receiving anti-parasite medication to protect against flesh-eating screwworms.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service says the Key deer no longer need oral medications because it's been over three months since the last confirmed screwworm infection in the National Key Deer Refuge.

A screwworm infestation that began last summer killed 135 Key deer. Officials said the infestation was a potential extinction event for the unique herd, which includes fewer than 1,000 deer in the Lower Florida Keys.

Wildlife officials said in their statement Wednesday that female [deer](#) with radio tracking collars will be monitored daily for screwworms through summer.

Millions of male screwworm flies sterilized with radiation have been released to suppress the fly's wild population. Those releases will end April 25.

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