**Fighting For Florida:**
Battling Invasive Wildlife In The Sunshine State

**Lionfish**
Lionfish impact reef systems by consuming a wide variety of native reef fishes. Divers, anglers and commercial harvesters are encouraged to remove lionfish in Florida waters to limit negative impacts to native marine life and ecosystems.

**Cane Toads**
The skin-gland secretions of cane toads are highly toxic and can sicken or even kill animals that bite or feed on them. The skin secretions may irritate the skin or burn the eyes of people who handle them.

**Green Iguanas**
Green iguanas frequently burrow into sidewalks, foundations, water control structures, canal banks, seawalls and roadways. Their burrows can undermine the integrity of these critical infrastructures. Green iguanas also consume ornamental or garden plants that can lead to human-wildlife conflict.

**Burmese Pythons**
Burmese pythons were likely established in Everglades National Park by the mid-1980s, and their population has since expanded into many of South Florida’s natural areas. Pythons are incredibly hard to find, creating a significant challenge for control. Burmese pythons eat a variety of prey including birds, mammals and even reptiles including alligators.

**Sailfin Catfish**
These invasive catfish disrupt aquatic food chains and are known to degrade bodies of water through burrowing and tunneling.

**Invasives**
There are at least 139 established nonnative fish and wildlife species in the Sunshine State. In fact, Florida has more nonnative species of reptiles and amphibians living and breeding in the wild than anywhere else in the world. Invasive wildlife can negatively impact an area’s ecology, cause economic harm and/or threaten human health and safety.

**How to help:**
Report observations of invasive wildlife to the Exotic Species Hotline (888-IVEGOT1), www.Ivegot1.org or using the IveGot1 smart phone apps. Citizens are encouraged to find ways they can participate— including removing invasive species when it’s safe to do so.

**Don’t Let It Loose!**
It is illegal to release nonnative species in Florida. FWC’s Exotic Pet Amnesty Program offers a legal, no-cost, no-penalty alternative to release of unwanted exotic pets.

**Management Priorities:**
Preventing the introduction and spread of invasive species is the most cost-effective approach to eliminating or reducing these threats. Even the best prevention efforts cannot stop all invasive species. Early detection and rapid response is a critical second defense against the establishment of invasive animals. Once invasive animals are well established, control and containment is necessary to protect natural resources.

**Prevention**
**Early Detection and Rapid Response**
**Control and Containment**

More information at www.MYFWC.com and www.fws.gov/verobeach/InvasiveSpecies.html