

Identifying the Next Conflict Wildlife Species

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ABSTRACT: The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has recognized that wildlife conflict is of increasing concern among Floridians. Calls to the FWC regarding questions and apprehension of a multitude of species has increased dramatically over the state in the past decade; so much so that the agency has dedicated staff in each regional office to triage these issues. Historically, the agency had collected data reflecting the amount of complaints regarding species such as alligators and bears; complaints on other species received limited documentation, until recently. In April 2015, the agency implemented a new tracking system called the Wildlife Incident Management System (WIMS). We are now better able to understand conflict wildlife issues both geographically and species-specific trends. Through data analysis, FWC has identified coyotes as an emerging conflict wildlife species. This presentation will cover the trends with conflict wildlife, specifically coyotes that FWC has been documenting since implementing WIMS. Because of Florida's growing resident and visiting population and the variety of wildlife species that thrive in the state, trends from Florida could reflect future conflict issues in other southeastern states.

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