

American Alligator

Alligator mississippiensis

American alligators are the largest reptiles in the United States. They can grow to be as long as 15 feet and weigh as much as 1,000 pounds. Half of an alligator's length is its massive, strong tail, which it uses to propel itself through the water. On average, males are slightly larger than females. Alligators are found throughout the southeastern United States in freshwater, slow-moving rivers, like the Flint River. They also live in swamps, marshes and lakes. American alligators once faced extinction and were placed on the endangered species list in 1967. Fortunately, the legal protection worked. Brought back from the brink of extinction, over a million of these reptiles survive today.



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