

Living with Alligators in Solivita

There's an old Florida saying:

"If You Have Water — You're Likely to Have Alligators."



Solivita is part of the Florida Wetlands. So it is only natural that we have alligators. And while alligators are dangerous wild creatures to be respected and avoided, there is no need to unreasonably fear them.

Alligators are opportunistic feeders. Their diets include prey species that are abundant and easily accessible. Juvenile alligators primarily eat insects, amphibians, small fish, and invertebrates. Adult alligators eat fish, snakes, turtles, small mammals, and birds. Solivita would have more pests were it not for the alligators. Living with alligators, and all wildlife, requires a healthy, common-sense outlook. Incursions in Solivita are rare and no human has ever been harmed.

Here are a few simple practices that will keep you and your pets safe:

- **NEVER FEED AN ALLIGATOR!** Feeding promotes curiosity and invites disaster.
- **KEEP YOUR DISTANCE.** Alligators are surprisingly fast on their feet and can climb fences. Avoid danger by staying at least 30 feet away and being alert and attentive.
- **STAY ALERT WHEN FISHING OR WALKING AT THE EDGE OF A POND.** Alligators are stealthy and hunt at the waters edge. Polk County requires pets to be leashed at all times. Always keep your pets clear of ponds.
- **KEEP CHILDREN AWAY FROM PONDS—ALWAYS.** Alligators are both quick and dangerous.
- **DON'T FEAR AN ALLIGATOR THAT'S IN OR NEAR THE WATER.** Alligators require sun to warm themselves. This is natural and benign behavior. Stay clear, and keep your pets safe inside your home.
- **GATORS ARE ACTIVE DURING MATING SEASON.** Springtime is when you are most likely to experience a wayward gator in your yard or driveway. Males seek females, and females search for a nesting area. Don't panic. Remain calm. Stay clear and safe in your home or auto. They will typically retreat.



Alligators that are reported are trapped and killed. Please, help with conservation efforts by reporting only legitimately aggressive and dangerous behavior.