# General Competition Rules

## Registration

- You must register online for the 2016 Python Challenge™ and pay the registration fee.
    a. The registration fee is $25 to register as *individual competitor.*
    b. The registration fee is $75 to register as a *team.*
    c. Teams can be composed of 2-5 individuals.
    d. Only the team captain needs to register; the team captain must list the names and unique email addresses of all team members and is responsible for paying the $75 entrance fee.
- You must be 18 years of age or older to register for the 2016 Python Challenge™, either as an individual or as a team captain.
    a. Individuals under 18 years of age may participate in the competition, but their registration must be completed by their parent or legal guardian.
- Once registered for the 2016 Python Challenge™, you will receive a no-cost permit as your authorization for removing and transporting Burmese pythons from the Participating Areas during the 4 weeks of the Challenge.
    a. All participants over the age of 18 must agree to a waiver of liability for themselves by signing the permit to make it valid.
    b. Parents or legal guardians of youth under the age of 18 must agree to a waiver of liability for their children by signing the permit to make it valid.
- You may register as both an individual participant and as part of a team, but there are no discounts or waivers of the registration fees.
- Before registering for the 2016 Python Challenge™, you are required to take the *Python Challenge™ Online Training.* Please reserve about 30 minutes to complete this learning module. While you may take the training as many times as you like, you must complete the training and pass the quiz at the end by scoring at least 80% in order to register for the 2016 Python Challenge™.
    a. Team captains are responsible for ensuring that all team members have taken the *Python Challenge™ Online Training* and have passed the quiz by scoring at least an 80%.
- Registration paid to the Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida is non-refundable.

## Participating Areas

- Registered participants may remove Burmese pythons from the following participating areas:
- Everglades and Francis S. Taylor Wildlife Management Area
- Holey Land Wildlife Management Area
- Rotenberger Wildlife Management Area
- Big Cypress Wildlife Management Area (Jan 16-Feb 1 only)

- Picayune Strand Wildlife Management Area/State Forest
- Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve
- Collier-Seminole State Park
- Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park
- Southern Glades Wildlife and Environmental Area/Python Challenge Area
- Frog Pond Small Game Area/Python Challenge Area
- Rocky Glades Small Game Area/Python Challenge Area
- Everglades National Park*
  *Limited to existing Everglades National Park authorized agents only.*

## Collecting Burmese Pythons

- You, and all participating team members (if part of a team), must carry a copy of your signed 2016 Python Challenge™ permit in your possession when participating in the 2016 Python Challenge™.
- Anyone under the age of 18 must be supervised by a registered adult when removing Burmese pythons during the competition, whether both are registered as individuals or as part of a team.
- Only Burmese pythons removed from the Participating Areas during the 4 weeks of the Challenge are valid entries for the competition. Participants are responsible for reviewing and following the General Competition Rules and the *Specific Area Rules* for the Participating Areas.
- Road-killed Burmese pythons are not counted towards the competition, but the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) would like to receive reports of any seen.
- Collection hours for Burmese pythons vary by property. Check the *Specific Area Rules* for collection times for the Participating Areas you intend to visit.
- Burmese pythons may be captured by hand and removed alive from most Participating Areas. See *Specific Area Rules* for the allowable methods of removing snakes from each location. Live pythons must be placed into a closely woven, double-seamed bag that is sealed, placed into a second closely woven, double-seamed bag that is sealed and then placed into a secure container labeled "Dangerous Reptiles" at the time of capture.
  a. Transport bags should be made of a woven material, and cannot be mesh or made of plastic.
  b. If pillowcases are used as snake transport bags, they should be made of cotton or a cotton blend material and not made entirely of polyester. When damp or wet, polyester becomes watertight and can suffocate snakes.
  c. The FWC recommends using electrical tape to seal snake transport bags.
  d. A heavy duty plastic tote box with locking handles can serve as a secure transport box. Bungee cords or tie down straps can be used to firmly keep lids secured to boxes. Some boxes allow for the use of padlocks to secure lids.
- Pythons may be harvested and turned in dead from some Participating Areas. See *Specific Area Rules* for the allowable methods of removing snakes from each location.

- Snake hooks, snake tongs, snake bags, noose poles and long-handled non-motorized tools may be used to capture Burmese pythons by hand.

- Use of traps, bait, explosives, chemicals, smoke and motorized tools is prohibited.

- Florida state statutes require that harvested pythons must be euthanized humanely. For more information, please refer to *828.12 (F.S.),* which prohibits inhumane treatment of animals.

  a. Participants that plan to euthanize pythons while participating in the Python Challenge™ are responsible for reviewing the methods of humane euthanasia as described by the American Veterinary Medical Association and can also review the document on humane euthanasia posted on the 2016 Python Challenge™ web site.

    1. Read the *AVMA document* on humane euthanasia.

    2. Read the Python Challenge™ document on *humane euthanasia.*

- Participants should be aware that littering and feeding bears and alligators is prohibited.

## Submitting Burmese Pythons

- All captured pythons, alive or dead, must be transported to an official 2016 Python Challenge™ drop-off location or FWC designee by 7:00 pm on the day of capture.

  a. In the event that the nearest drop-off location is closed, participants must immediately call the FWC's Wildlife Alert Hotline at 888-404-FWCC (888-404-3922) to report their collected python and receive instructions on submitting the snake to the FWC.

- Live Burmese pythons must remain double-bagged and in a secure transport container from the time of capture until they are submitted. Live pythons may not be removed from their bags or transport containers for any type of public or private exhibition purposes, including use for any public or educational presentations.

  a. Secure transport boxes that contain live Burmese pythons should be kept out of direct sunlight in a shaded area. Pythons that are kept in secure transport boxes that are placed in direct sunlight or kept in an area that exceeds 85° F can die.

- A *datasheet* must be completed and submitted for each collected Burmese python for it to be logged to reflect the correct competitor, snake and location of capture. Burmese pythons submitted without the completed datasheet will not be included in the competition.

  a. Participants in the 2016 Python Challenge™ are encouraged to voluntarily turn in datasheets for pythons that were seen but not captured. Additionally, information on where pythons are not being observed can be as valuable as where pythons are observed.

## Prize Determination

- All prizes determination will be conducted by the Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida in coordination with the FWC. All prizes will be provided by the Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida.

- Burmese pythons submitted after 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 14, 2016 will NOT be considered for a prize.

- All Burmese pythons will be verified, measured and weighed using a standardized protocol. This data will be provided to the FWC in order to determine competition winners, and all decisions will be finalized before the 2016 Python Challenge™ Awards event on Saturday, February 27, 2016.

- Snakes harvested and submitted dead should be in no more than two pieces (e.g., the head removed from the body) to be eligible for the longest Burmese python prize.

- In the event of a tie for the most pythons, the award will be given to the participant with the longest total length of all pythons captured by that participant. In the event of a tie in the category for total length, the award will be given to the participant with the python that is the longest and weighs the most.

- You do not need to be present at the Python Challenge™ Awards Event on Saturday, February 27, 2016 to be eligible to collect any prizes that you have won. However, all participants are encouraged to attend.

- Participants that win monetary prizes will need to fill out an IRS Form W-9 (Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification) prior to receiving their winnings. Monetary winners can fill out the required W-9 form at the 2016 Python Challenge™ Awards Event on Saturday, February 27, 2016. Monetary winners that do not attend the Awards Event will receive a W-9 form by mail and will have 30 days to return the completed form to the Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida.

- Monetary winners that do not submit a completed W-9 form within 30 days of receipt will forfeit their prize.

## Disqualifications

- You and (if participating as part of a team) your entire team *will be disqualified* from the competition and ineligible to win any prizes if you:

  1. Submit a snake that has been collected outside of the specified areas of competition.

  2. Collect and/or submit a native Florida snake.

  3. Submit a snake originally possessed as a pet.

  4. Submit a Burmese python originally possessed for commercial use.

  5. Burmese pythons fitted with radio transmitters should not be killed. These snakes must be captured and submitted live from all participating areas.

  6. Are found to have inhumanely euthanized a snake.

  7. Are found to have kept any live snake in a secure transport box that was placed in direct sunlight or kept in an area that was above 85° F, causing death or extreme heat trauma to the animal, or are found to have used incorrect transportation materials outlined in the "Collecting Burmese Python" section above.

  8. Post inhumane photos or videos on social media.

  9. Are found to have used collected Burmese pythons for any type of public or private exhibition.

- Any participant or person who violates any rules of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), or Florida State Statutes (F.S.), shall be subject to disqualification from the 2016 Python Challenge™ as well as charged accordingly for said violation. Persons disqualified from the contest will not receive a refund of their entry fee.