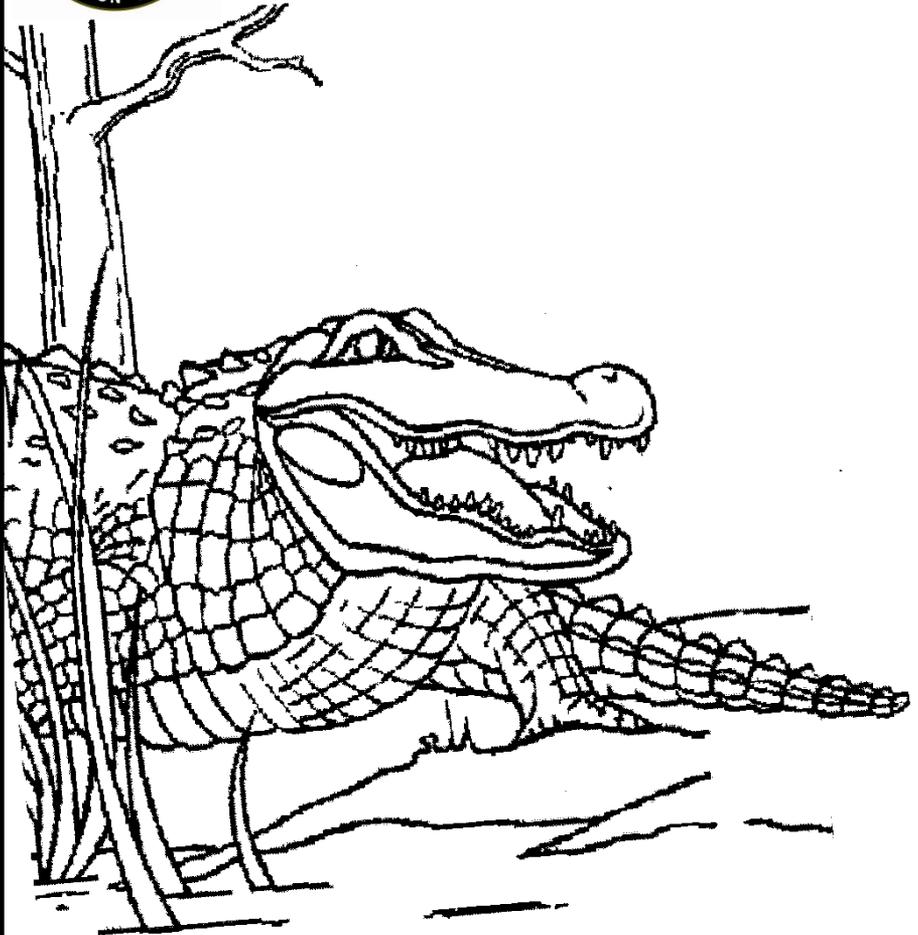




Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission



American Alligators spend most of their time in the water and swim by moving their large, flat tails back and forth like fish. They can also be seen lying on land in the warm sun. Alligators have powerful jaws to help them eat almost anything, including turtles! Mother alligators lay their eggs in large leaf and stick nests and help the babies dig out upon hatching.



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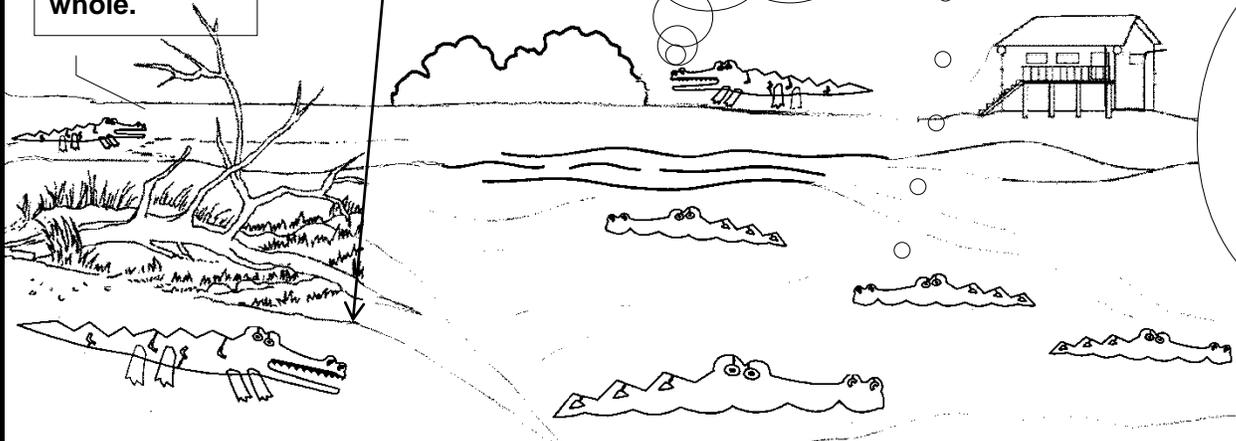
Sometimes I spin to break my prey into chunks that I can swallow whole.

Until laws were passed to protect alligators like me, we almost became extinct because of my handsome hide.

Despite many stories that I may live up to 200 years, the average life span for my species is only about 40 years.

During the dry season, the holes I create provide habitat for many animals such as small fish, snails, turtles, snakes, and frogs.

I can often be seen in the water with only the tip of my nose and my eyes visible.



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