



# LOUISIANA'S EXOTIC AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES



## BRAHMANY BLINDSNAKE

Type: Exotic

**Year Established:** First documented in 1996

**Established Range:** Suburban and urban areas in New Orleans metro area; Lafayette

**Comments:** This small species is typically found in the soil. It is an all-female species that reproduces asexually, so one individual may establish a population.



## FLORIDA SOFTSHELL

Type: Exotic

**Year Established:** Possibly as early as 1970s; confirmed breeding in 2011

**Established Range:** Cameron Parish

**Comments:** Presumably introduced at the conclusion of culture studies at Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge in the 1970s, the effect of this introduction on native Spiny Softshells is being investigated.

## EXOTIC OR INVASIVE?

**Exotic species** are simply organisms that are introduced to an area where they do not occur naturally. Though these introductions can happen through natural processes, in most instances it is due to intentional or unintentional movement of organisms by humans. Exotic species are also sometimes called non-native, non-indigenous, foreign, introduced, or alien species.

**Invasive species** are species whose introduction has caused economic, environmental or ecologic harm. Some characteristics of invasive species include fast growth, short generation times, high reproductive output, high dispersal ability, a tolerance of a wide range of environmental conditions, and, in animals, a generalist diet. These characteristics often lead invasive species to outcompete or otherwise displace native species.

Some sources state that an invasive species is, by definition, also an exotic species. However, when changes to an ecosystem alter the normal system of checks and balances, even native species can adapt qualities of invasive species. For this reason, the preferred terminology of L.A.R.E. is 'exotic' when referring to a benign non-native species, and 'exotic invasive' when referring to a non-native species known to harm the ecosystem.



## CUBAN TREEFROG

Type: Exotic Invasive

**Year Established:** 2016

**Established Range:** Orleans and St. Charles Parishes

**Comments:** This species is known to cause ecologic, economic, and human impacts in Florida where they have been an exotic invasive for decades. Positively identified individuals discovered should be humanely euthanized.



## RIO GRANDE CHIRPING FROG

Type: Exotic

**Year Established:** First population discovered in 1998

**Established Range:** Shreveport; suburban and urban areas in central and southwest LA east to Baton Rouge

**Comments:** This small species hides in leaf litter and under ground cover. It does not have a free-swimming tadpole stage, laying eggs in moist areas on land.



## GREENHOUSE FROG

Type: Exotic

**Year Established:** 1975

**Established Range:** Discovered in New Orleans; now found in urban and suburban areas of south Louisiana

**Comments:** This small species exists in a mottled and striped phase, and hides in leaf litter and under ground cover. It does not have a free-swimming tadpole stage, laying eggs in moist areas on land.



## MEDITERRANEAN GECKO

Type: Exotic

**Year Established:** 1940s

**Established Range:** Statewide

**Comments:** This species seemingly arrived in New Orleans in WWII cargo from the Mediterranean region. This species is nocturnal and primarily lives on homes and buildings in urban and suburban areas.



## SRI LANKAN SPOTTED HOUSE GECKO

Type: Exotic

**Year Established:** at least by 2012

**Established Range:** New Orleans metro area

**Comments:** This species was first documented from the Audubon Zoo, but has since been detected at many other locations around New Orleans, and will likely be found at many more.



## BROWN ANOLE

Type: Exotic Invasive

**Year Established:** early 2000s

**Established Range:** New Orleans metro area and other urban and suburban areas in south Louisiana

**Comments:** Brown Anoles have displaced native Green Anoles in many areas in Florida, where they have been established for decades.