



# American Alligator

*Alligator Mississippiensis*

- Lucyr is only a few years old.
- A group of alligators is called a congregation.
- They are a keystone species, which means other organisms depend on them to survive. Without them, an ecosystem would either evolve or collapse. Many other species use their “alligator holes” as their own habitats and they are beneficial to the swamp, marsh, lake, and river ecosystems they live in.
- Females make a nest and lay from 20 - 50 eggs with each egg weighing 2 - 3 oz. Hatching occurs after 65 days of incubation.

- The largest alligator ever found in North Carolina was a 635-pound alligator that was hit by a car in Manns Harbor in May 2014.

**LUCY THE GATOR** was being kept illegally as a pet in North Carolina. After animal control was called on their previous owner the Catawba Science Center stepped in to relocate them our new exhibit. They alligator's enclosure had to be built on site and can hold even if they grow to their maximum size!



# Lucy