



American Alligator



[Intentionally Left Blank]



American Alligator

by Ellen Lawrence

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BEARPORT
PUBLISHING

New York, New York

Credits

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Publisher: Kenn Goin

Senior Editor: Joyce Tavalacci

Creative Director: Spencer Brinker

Design: Emma Randall

Photo Researcher: Ruby Tuesday Books Ltd

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Lawrence, Ellen, 1967– author.

Title: American alligator / by Ellen Lawrence.

Description: New York, New York : Bearport Publishing, [2017] | Series: Swamp things: animal life in a wetland | Audience: Ages 7–11. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2016012091 (print) | LCCN 2016015638 (ebook) | ISBN 9781944102517 (library binding) | ISBN 9781944997175 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: American alligator—Juvenile literature. | CYAC: Alligators.

Classification: LCC QL666.C925 L39 2017 (print) | LCC QL666.C925 (ebook) | DDC 597.98/4—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2016012091>

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For more information, write to Bearport Publishing Company, Inc., 45 West 21st Street, Suite 3B, New York, New York 10010. Printed in the United States of America.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



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Mealtime!

It's evening in the Atchafalaya (uh-chaf-uh-LYE-uh) Swamp, and a duck is paddling in a shallow lake.

Suddenly, an American alligator shoots out of the water.


It snaps at the bird with its huge jaws.

The terrified duck flaps its wings and escapes.

Slowly, the alligator sinks back beneath the water to wait for its next meal.



wood duck

A close-up photograph of an American alligator's head, showing its mouth wide open. The alligator has dark, scaly skin and sharp, white teeth. The interior of its mouth is pink. The background is a body of water.

An alligator
is a type of **reptile**.
This group of animals
includes crocodiles,
turtles, lizards,
and snakes.

American alligator

An Alligator's World

American alligators live in warm areas in the southern United States.

They make their homes in rivers, lakes, and swampy areas like the Atchafalaya.

In a swamp, most of the land is covered by water.

Alligators spend a lot of time in the water, but they also live on damp, muddy land.



A large American alligator is lying on a grassy bank next to a body of water. The alligator's mouth is slightly open, showing its teeth and tongue. The background is filled with dense, green vegetation and thin tree trunks.

The American
alligator is the
largest reptile
in the United
States.

How would you describe an
American alligator to someone
who has never seen one?