In recent years, non-native snakes were introduced to Texas via reptile enthusiasts and the pet trade. For a variety of reasons, people have released some of these snakes from captivity.

The Burmese python (Python bivittatus) is a prime example of a non-native species that could have devastating effects on our state.

Case in point: in Florida Burmese pythons formerly kept as pets now breed in the wild and number over 10,000. They threaten public safety, harm tourism, and are driving native species to extinction.

In 2021, the Texas Legislature passed HB 2326 making it illegal to release Burmese pythons in Texas in order to protect our wildlife and ecosystems.

Violators face a Class C misdemeanor, which can escalate to Class B for a subsequent conviction. The law is effective September 1, 2021.

For more information about the regulation of non-native snakes, please visit the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department’s website.