

Guidelines for Importing Arthropods and Other Invertebrates into Florida

This list gives guidance for the pet trade, public exhibits, field release, and similar uses. The four categories (Regular/Approved without conditions, Conditional, Restricted, Prohibited) take into consideration an organism's inherent risk (due to biology and known distribution) and the risks associated with containing the organism for its intended use. Organisms for scientific research inside quarantine laboratories (e.g. biocontrol agents, plant pests, and disease vectors) are not listed below; they also require permits and are considered case by case. The examples given below are not exhaustive. These guidelines are advice about what to expect for most permit applications reviewed by FDACS-DPI, but the Permit Conditions may differ as circumstances warrant.

Permits are **NOT** required for most species that are either native to or widely established in Florida, **provided they were collected within the State or obtained from verified in-state sources**. These sources must have either a PPQ 526 or FDACS-08208 permit for the species, or confirm their inventory is wild-caught within the state.

Permits are required for all regulated organisms brought into Florida from outside of the state. Applicants should first inquire whether a USDA-APHIS-PPQ 526 permit is required; if APHIS does not regulate it, then applicants must submit a FDACS-08208 application. Permits are also required for certain pests of limited distribution as deemed by the DPI. Local collection or movement of endangered and threatened species may be subject to additional State and federal permit requirements. When in doubt, contact DPI-Permits@FDACS.gov with any questions about a particular species.

All organisms must be identified by scientific names (both genus and species); listing organisms by only common name or trade name will not be approved. For example: “Dairy cow isopod” (unacceptable), *Porcellio laevis* “Dairy Cow” (acceptable).

The department may require the permittee to submit physical voucher specimens. The purpose is to independently verify the identity of approved species. Alternatively, the department may require photograph vouchers on a case-by-case basis.

I. Regular/Approved without conditions: Organisms usually will be approved without conditions. See [Feeder Arthropod Regulations](#) for other permissible species in this category which have been deregulated and no longer require a permit.

- **Annelida, Oligochaeta** (earthworms): all species established in the state.
- **Arachnida:**
 - Araneae, Theraphosidae (tarantulas): most species.
 - Salticidae (jumping spiders): native/established species. See [Permitted Jumping Spiders in Florida](#) for permissible species.
 - Scorpiones (scorpions): genera with species in this category include but are not limited to: *Chaerilus* spp., *Hadogenes* spp. (flat rock scorpions), *Heterometrus* spp. (Asian forest scorpions), *Pandinus* spp. (emperor scorpions).

- **Collembola** (springtails); native/established species.
- **Isopoda, Oniscoidea** (isopods): all native/established terrestrial isopods or species deemed low risk by the Department. See [Isopods Permitted in Florida](#) for permissible species.
- **Insecta:**
 - **Blattodea** (cockroaches): feeders e.g. *Parcoblatta pennsylvanica* and *Pycnoscelus surinamensis*.
 - **Coleoptera** (beetles): species within the family Lucanidae and genus *Dynastes*.
 - **Diptera** (flies): feeders e.g. *Hermetia illucens* (black soldier fly), *Musca domestica* (house fly).
 - **Hymenoptera, Formicidae** (ants): complete colonies with reproductives allowed for native/established species e.g. *Aphaenogaster floridana*, *Camponotus floridanus*, *Crematogaster ashmeadi*, and *Pheidole littoralis*.
 - **Lepidoptera** (butterflies, moths):
 - Feeder e.g. *Chilecomadia moorei*.
 - Species intended for release must originate from Eastern North America (delimited by 100° longitude). These include but are not limited to: *Agraulis vanilla* (Gulf fritillary), *Colias philodice* (clouded sulphur), *Papilio polyxenes* (black swallowtail), *Vanessa* spp. (admirals, painted ladies); *Danaus plexippus* (monarch) must originate from East of the Continental Divide.
 - **Orthoptera** (crickets, grasshoppers): native/established species such as *Romalea microptera* (Eastern lubber), *Gryllus assimilis* (Jamaican field cricket), and *Schistocerca americana* (American grasshopper)

II. Conditional: Applicant must provide a general written description of security measures used to prevent escape of organisms on the permit application. State conditions will be dependent on the requested species but typically include: cages must be locked, kept in double containment, limited to non-reproductive or male specimens only.

- **Arachnida:** all non-native species except as listed above.
 - Amblypygi (whip scorpions): all non-native species.
 - Araneae
 - **Theraphosidae** (tarantulas): most non-arboreal tarantulas. Genera with conditional species include but are not limited to: *Avicularia* spp., *Caribena* spp., *Chilobrachys* spp., *Chromatopelma* spp., *Cyriopagopus* spp., *Harpactira* spp., *Heteroscodra* spp., *Ornithoconus* spp., *Orphnaecus* spp., *Phormingochilus* spp., *Poecilotheria* spp., *Psalmopoeus* spp., *Pterinochilus* spp., *Selenocosmia* spp., *Stromatopelma* spp., *Tapinauchenius* spp.
 - Other spider families with conditional species include but are not limited to: **Liphistiidae** and **Sparassidae**.
 - Scorpiones (scorpions): genera with conditional species include but are not limited to: *Centruroides* spp. (bark scorpions), *Hottentotta* spp., *Lychas* spp., and *Parabuthus* spp.
 - Solifugae (camel spiders): all non-native species.
- **Chilopoda** (centipedes): all non-native species.
- **Diplopoda** (millipedes): all non-native species.
- **Insecta:**

- **Blattodea** (cockroaches): Adult Males only for non-native species, e.g.: *Gromphadorhina portentosa* (Madagascar hissing cockroach) and *Macropanesthia rhinoceros* (giant burrowing cockroach).
- **Hymenoptera, Formicidae** (ants): only non-reproductive castes allowed for non-established species, e.g. *Pogonomyrmex barbatus*.
- **Mantodea** (mantids): Adult Males only for all non-native species.

III. Restricted: Organisms will be permitted only to institutions such as museums, zoos, and arthropod exhibits. Commercialization or distribution of these species will not be approved. Applicant must provide a detailed written description of security measures used to prevent escape of organisms, including transportation packaging, Standard Operating Procedures, and handling by trained staff. Organisms must be restricted from public access.

- **Insecta:**

- **Blattodea** (cockroaches): both sexes of non-native species e.g., *Gromphadorhina portentosa* (Madagascar hissing cockroach) and *Blaberus giganteus* (Giant cave cockroach) and *Eublaberus posticus* (orange head cockroach)
- **Coleoptera** (beetles): non-native examples include but are not limited to,
 - Plant-feeding Scarabaeidae e.g., *Chalcosoma atlas* (atlas beetle) and Tenebrionidae e.g., *Asbolus verrucosus* (blue death feigning beetle).
 - Predatory Dytiscidae e.g., *Thermonectus marmoratus* (sunburst diving beetle).
- **Hemiptera:** Reduviidae (assassin bugs) e.g. *Platyeris biguttata* and *P. laevicollis*.
- **Lepidoptera** (butterflies, moths): select non-native species only allowed for butterfly houses with approved federal containment facilities.
- **Mantodea** (Mantids): both sexes of non-native species.
- **Orthoptera** (grasshoppers, crickets): all non-native species.
- **Phasmatodea** (walkingsticks, leaf insects): all non-native species.

IV. Prohibited: Any organism demonstrated to be or potentially capable of causing significant agricultural or ecological harm, becoming public nuisances, or known health hazards.

- **Arachnida:** Extremely venomous non-natives or those that pose significant ecological concerns
 - **Araneae:** Spider families with prohibited non-native species include but are not limited to: Ctenidae (wandering spiders), Sicariidae (recluse and sand spiders), Theridiidae (widows), Eresidae (velvet spiders), Lycosidae (wolf spiders), Salticidae (jumping spiders, see [Permitted Jumping Spiders](#) for allowed species).
 - **Scorpiones** (scorpions): Genera with prohibited species e.g., *Androctonus* spp. and *Leiurus* spp.
- **Collembola** (springtails): all non-native species.
- **Gastropoda** (snails, slugs): all non-native plant-feeding snails and slugs e.g. *Lissachatina fulica* (giant African land snail) and *Leidyula sloanii*, (pancake slug)
- **Insecta:** Any non-native species that are deemed to be pests by the Department, especially when intended for outdoor release (e.g. research, pest management, or celebrations) or other commercial distribution.
 - **Plant-feeding Lepidoptera** (butterflies, moths)
 - **Coleoptera** (beetles) which feed directly on or develop within plant material (including dead plant material)

- **Predatory insects** e.g., Coccinellidae (ladybird beetles), Dicyphine mirids, and *Orius* spp. (minute pirate bugs).
- **Blattodea** (cockroaches): pet trade feeders including but not limited to: *Blaptica dubia* (dubia roach) and *Nauphoeta cinerea* (lobster roach).
- **Hymenoptera, Formicidae** (ants): reproductive colonies and non-reproductive castes for high-risk species (e.g. *Pogonomyrmex occidentalis*)
- **Isopoda, Oniscoidea** (isopods): non-native or not established terrestrial species and those with high risk of establishment (e.g. *Armadillidium klugii* and *A. maculatum*). See [Isopods Permitted in Florida](#) for permissible species.

The list is subject to change as new information becomes available. Applications for exceptions must include an environmental impact statement supported by new evidence that the species is widely established in Florida or peer-reviewed, published experimental evidence of safety, such as host-plant choice testing or complete studies on venom potency.