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Alligator Props Used In Bird Battle

Feb 3, 2005 8:28 am US/Eastern

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (AP) Alligator heads are popping up in the pond at the University of Alabama at Huntsville, but don't worry. Officials say it's just ducky.

The life-size, urethane-foam alligator heads were being put in the pond Wednesday to scare away ducks and geese so the growing bird population will not become a health hazard.

The Gator Guard from Bird-X Inc. costs \$69 and has reflective orange-yellow eyes that resemble one of the birds' natural predators.

"Our fear is that we'll put them out and the ducks will figure out they're not a threat," said Marcia Green, director of the UAH office of environmental health and safety.

She said the two will sometimes be anchored in the lake to float and move around in the water.

"We aren't going to keep them there permanently," Green said.

Green's office checked with the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources about effective waterfowl population control before deciding to try the faux-alligators.

Green said they have reportedly been effective at other schools and on golf courses.

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