

Sheriff

(352) 569-1600



WILLIAM O. "BILL" FARMER, JR. –

SUMTER COUNTY

MEMBER, FLORIDA SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION
1010 NORTH MAIN STREET
BUSHNELL, FLORIDA 33513

MEDIA RELEASE

Contact Person

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Law Enforcement Division

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Burglary / Grand Theft / Animal Cruelty / Arson

On Friday June 22, 2018, at 8:30 p.m., the Sumter County Sheriff's Office responded to a reported structure fire at SW 52nd Terr, Bushnell, FL. Sumter County Fire Rescue responded to the scene and once the fire was extinguished it was determined to be a total loss. During a subsequent search of the burned building, a Leucistic alligator (aka Snowball) (pictured) was discovered missing and believed stolen. The victim advised the Leucistic alligator was in the building at 1130 a.m. that morning and was housed with forty three other reptiles. All of the other animals (43 total) in the building were accounted for within the burned structure and found to be deceased. The deceased animals consisted of both alligators and crocodiles. The State Fire Marshal's Office was contacted and is investigating the cause of the fire which at this time appears to be arson. Based on items observed at the scene, it appears that the building was burglarized first and then set on fire after the theft of the rare alligator.

If anyone has information about this case, or contact is made with this animal or one or similar markings, contact Sumter County Sheriff's Detective Chris Merritt at 352-793-2621 or Crimeline at 1-800-423-TIPS (8477).



1
CRIMELINE
800.423.TIPS
800.423.8477

A graphic of a fingerprint.