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Alligator caught in pond near Maiden

The Associated Press

MAIDEN, N.C. When two eyes peeked out of the water, a trio of young fishing buddies knew they weren't looking at a fish.

"We threw a stick at it to see what it was," 11-year-old Jim Vang told The Hickory Daily Record. "It stuck its head out of the water a little more, and that's when we saw that it was an alligator."

Using a piece of bologna tied to a string, rescue workers caught the 2 1/2-foot-long alligator Wednesday after Vang and his friends asked adults to call police. The reptile could have grown to as many as 10 feet had it not been caught in the pond, said Eric Kanipe, one of two Maiden Rescue Squad members who helped catch the alligator.

"This had to have been someone's pet that they didn't want anymore and just dumped in the pond," Kanipe said. "These things don't live around here, and they don't just appear in this area."

The alligator's jaw was taped shut with duct tape so it could be moved safely. A state Wildlife Resource Commission officer was scheduled to pick up the animal Thursday.

It's illegal to keep an exotic animal in Catawba County, according to the newspaper. Maiden is about 40 miles northwest of Charlotte.

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Alligator caught in pond near Maiden

Associated Press - July 4, 2007 8:45 PM ET

MAIDEN, N.C. (AP) - Three children fishing at a pond nearly caught something more than they expected on Independence Day -- a 31-inch alligator.

Two rescue squad workers caught the animal with a piece of bologna attached to a string and thrown into the water. The Hickory Daily Record reported that they then taped the alligator's jaw shut so it could be moved safely.

An officer with the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission is scheduled to pick up the

animal Thursday.

The three friends fishing there first saw two eyes peeking out of the water before realizing it was an alligator and telling nearby adults to call police.

