



PROTECT YOUR WATERS

Be a Responsible Pet & Aquarium Owner!

Protect New York's lakes and rivers when rehoming your unwanted pets or disposing of aquatic plants. Many species that make great pets can become harmful invasive species when released into the wild.

Invasive species are plants, animals, and diseases that are not native to an area and that negatively impact the environment, the economy, or human health.

Releasing or leaving pets or plants in nearby fields or waterbodies can lead to infestations that:

- Harm native species;
- Negatively impact recreation and tourism;
- Spread diseases; and
- Create risks to public health and safety.



HOW TO HELP

- Before you purchase or adopt it, learn about the plant or animal to help you decide if you can commit to its long-term care.
- If you can no longer care for a plant or animal, donate it to a school, nature center, aquarium, or zoo, or return it to the retailer, if possible.
- Dispose of dead animals and aquatic plants by putting them in the garbage in a sealed bag or burying them (where permissible).
- **Never place plants or animals into nearby waterbodies, toilets, compost piles, or the outdoor environment.**



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Invasive Species of the Pet and Aquarium Trade

Prohibited species: plants or animals that are illegal to sell, import, purchase, transport, or introduce (release into the environment)

Regulated species: plants or animals that can be sold (must be labeled as invasive) or owned, but cannot be released or planted in the outdoor environment

FANWORT (*Cabomba caroliniana*) PROHIBITED:

Geaves Lovell, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bugwood.org



- Submerged plant with fan-like leaves; white flowers bloom in spring/summer
- Forms dense mats that may reduce biodiversity and deplete oxygen

NORTHERN SNAKEHEAD (*Channa argus*) PROHIBITED:

commons.wikimedia.org



- Long, thin fish with a single fin running the length of its back
- Aggressive feeding habits that can reduce or eliminate native fish populations and change aquatic communities

HYDRILLA (*Hydrilla verticillata*) PROHIBITED:

Tim Kynak, Cleveland Metroparks, Bugwood.org



- 4–8 (commonly, 5) blade-like leaves with slightly toothed edges around stem
- Grows in dense mats that make boating, fishing, and swimming difficult

RED-EARED SLIDER (*Trachemys scripta elegans*) REGULATED:

Oleg Hume, commons.wikimedia.org



- Unique red/orange stripe behind each eye
- Competes with native turtles for food, nesting sites, and basking places

PARROT FEATHER (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*) PROHIBITED:

Leslie J. Meinhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org



- Feathery green leaves that are both above and below the water's surface
- Grows in dense mats that outcompete native plants

Have you seen these plants or animals outdoors?

Take photos and report infestations to isinfo@dec.ny.gov

or to the [iMapInvasives](https://www.nyimainvasives.org) database:

www.nyimainvasives.org

PROTECT NEW YORK FROM INVASIVE SPECIES
For more pet and aquarium owner information, including a list of prohibited and regulated species visit <https://on.ny.gov/2VL1Bwf>.