

DON'T LET IT LOOSE!

Releasing a pet into the wild is never the right thing.

Most pets can't survive in the wild, and many suffer before they die. Pets are usually unable to find food or shelter, and are often easy prey for another creature. If they survive, released pets may introduce diseases to native wildlife, or become an invasive species that harms the environment and economy.

Before getting an exotic pet...

- *Research its life cycle and needs. If you can't commit to caring for it long-term, consider getting a different pet.
- *Don't take in a regulated or prohibited species of plant or animal. For info on regulated and prohibited species, see:
wdfw.wa.gov/ais/species.html
ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/plants/weeds/exotic.html

If you have an unwanted pet...

- *Rehome it using social media, online classifieds, etc.
- *Contact a local pet store, shelter, zoo, aquarium, etc. to see if they will take it.
- *As a last resort, a qualified veterinarian can humanely euthanize the animal.
- *Seal aquatic plants in plastic bags and dispose of in the trash - do not compost.
- *Teachers: use an adoption pledge where students and parents volunteer to take a pet home and not release it into the wild.
- *Visit our website for more options and assistance:

InvasiveSpecies.wa.gov

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