



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Fisheries

# Don't dump that fish!

Help keep aquarium fish  
where they belong



**PROTECTING OUR  
WATERS FROM AQUATIC  
PESTS AND DISEASES**

## Pets can become pests

Protect the environment – don't release aquarium fish into Western Australia's sensitive waterways.

Aquarium fish that are not native are often more aggressive than native species and can outcompete them, consuming their food and taking up their space. They can also spread disease, kill local species and damage natural habitats.

Aquarium snails can also cause damage and aquarium plants can choke waterways.

Please be responsible. **Never dump fish or aquarium contents into toilets, in or near waterways, into drains or the ocean.**

## Pest watch

Introduced species are already threatening our WA species – we don't want to add more.

Species causing problems include:



Photo: Lars Simonsen

### **Apple or mystery snail** (*Pomacea bridgesii*)

Spreads rapidly in running water, such as drainage channels.

Grows to 5 cm wide and 6.5 cm high.



### **Aquarium water, gravel and 'live rock'** (pieces of coral reef).

Contain organisms that could become pests.

## No longer want your fish?

If your fish are healthy but you no longer want them, give them to a pet shop, other fish owners (you could advertise them on a local notice board) or an organisation with an aquarium. A school, office or nursing home may be willing to take them. If they don't have an aquarium, consider donating yours.

If you can't find a new home for your fish, or **if they are sick or diseased**, dispose of them humanely. Visit the RSPCA website ([www.kb.rspca.org.au](http://www.kb.rspca.org.au)) and search using the term 'humanely euthanase fish'.

Tip **aquarium water** onto grass, away from drains and waterways.

Put **gravel, live rock and aquatic plants** in the bin or bury them in your garden.



### **Cabomba weed**

(*Cabomba caroliniana*)

Chokes native plants, birds, fish and reptiles. Stems grow to 5 m (sometimes 10 m) long.



### **Carp and goldfish**

(Cyprinidae family)

Outcompetes and spreads fish disease to native fish. Grows to 10–30 cm.



### **Tilapia** (*Oreochromis mossambicus*)

Competes with native species for food and space. Stirs up mud, ruining waterways for other species. Grows to 39 cm.

## Help protect our waterways

- Don't import, keep, breed or release noxious species. Penalties of \$10,000 or more apply. Visit [www.fish.wa.gov.au/biosecurity](http://www.fish.wa.gov.au/biosecurity) for information on noxious fish, all of which are banned in WA.
- Don't buy fish, plants or live rock from overseas on the internet. Use a reputable local dealer.
- Don't design fish tanks and ornamental ponds so that contents can overflow and enter our waterways.
- If you see anything unusual in our waterways, call FishWatch on **1800 815 507** or email [biosecurity@fish.wa.gov.au](mailto:biosecurity@fish.wa.gov.au)
- Help us by using WA PestWatch to report suspected aquatic pests – visit WA PestWatch on our website or download the WA PestWatch app from the App Store and Google Play Store.



Supported by:



Department of  
**Agriculture and Food**



## Further information

### DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES

3rd Floor, The Atrium,  
168–170 St Georges Terrace,  
Perth WA 6000  
(08) 9482 7333  
[biosecurity@fish.wa.gov.au](mailto:biosecurity@fish.wa.gov.au)  
ABN: 55 689 794 771

[www.fish.wa.gov.au/biosecurity](http://www.fish.wa.gov.au/biosecurity)

*Fish for the future*

