

Prohibited pets



Why control pets?

Many animals introduced into Australia have become serious pests. Examples include the cane toad, fox, cat, (European) rabbit and many other less common animals.

These animals cost Queensland a great deal of money and may have contributed to the extinction of several native animals. Introduced animals can spread infectious diseases, including exotic diseases (such as rabies) and other diseases that are dangerous to humans (such as herpes B).

The importation and keeping of some animals as pets is restricted by legislation. If there were no controls over the keeping and importation of potential pest animals, some animals would inevitably escape due to:

- poor cage construction
- accidental release
- irresponsible owners releasing unwanted pets into the wild.

These animals could then multiply into feral populations.

The basic philosophy behind the law is: *prevention is much cheaper than cure*. Legislation protects Queensland's environment and economy from further damage due to new species of introduced animals.



Don't risk a fine

It is illegal to keep most declared mammal species as pets in Queensland.

Biosecurity Queensland—part of the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI)—in conjunction with local governments, control the keeping of declared animals as pets. The list of declared animals presently contains mammals and reptiles only. The maximum fine for keeping declared mammals or reptiles is \$80 000.

The keeping of most native wildlife and certain introduced birds is regulated by the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM). The keeping of certain exotic fish is regulated by DEEDI. A fine applies for the keeping or release of noxious fish species from aquariums.

Pets that are prohibited in Queensland

Prohibited mammals

All introduced mammal species are prohibited as pets unless listed as exceptions.

A sample of these prohibited mammals include:

- foxes
- squirrels
- ferrets/polecats/stoats
- rabbits
- hamsters
- monkeys/marmosets
- gerbils
- weasels
- dingoes/hybrids

Exceptions

Introduced mammals that can be kept as pets in Queensland (subject to local government by-laws):

- dogs
- cats
- horses
- goats (domestic)
- donkeys
- guinea pigs
- black/brown rats
- house mice

- domestic pigs
- deer (farmed species as long as these deer are kept within a deer-proof enclosure).

All other exotic mammals are illegal.

The keeping of native mammals is controlled by DERM.

Prohibited reptiles and birds

All reptile species introduced to Queensland are prohibited. Reptiles include snakes, lizards and turtles, including:

- American corn snakes
- red-eared slider turtles
- boa constrictors
- all tortoises.

Certain exotic birds are also prohibited.

Some native reptiles and birds may be kept under a permit issued by DERM. Contact your local DERM office.

Prohibited fish

Certain introduced fish are declared noxious in Queensland. Noxious fish cannot be brought into Queensland.

The list of prohibited fish is subject to change and includes:

- tilapia
- mosquito fish
- largemouth bass
- European carp.

For further information contact DEEDI on 13 25 23.

Reporting prohibited pets

Please report any illegal activities such as the importation, sale and keeping of prohibited animals. Your action will protect Queensland's environment and agriculture from degradation by introduced pest animals.

Further information

Further information is available from your local government office, or by contacting Biosecurity Queensland (call 13 25 23 or visit our website at www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au).

Fact sheets are available from Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) service centres and our Business Information Centre (telephone 13 25 23). Check our website at www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au to ensure you have the latest version of this fact sheet. The control methods referred to in this fact sheet should be used in accordance with the restrictions (federal and state legislation, and local government laws) directly or indirectly related to each control method. These restrictions may prevent the use of one or more of the methods referred to, depending on individual circumstances. While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this information, DEEDI does not invite reliance upon it, nor accept responsibility for any loss or damage caused by actions based on it.