

Invasive species are moving across BC and Canada at a rapid pace:

- BC is home to more species of living things than any other province in Canada, including 72% of Canada's mammal species, 70% of Canada's nesting bird species and 50% of Canada's amphibian species: invasive species are the second biggest threat to this biodiversity after habitat loss.
- In Canada, invasive species include at least 27% of all vascular plants, 181 insects, 24 birds, 26 mammals, 2 reptiles, 4 amphibians, several fungi and molluscs, and 55 freshwater fish.
- The estimated annual cumulative lost revenue caused by just 16 invasive species is \$13-\$35 billion.
- Some of the most serious invasive species were originally sold as pets or plants for water gardens and aquariums.



Releasing pets into the wild is both inhumane and dangerous:

- British Columbia is home to several introduced invasive pet species. Pet owners release these species thinking it is a humane way to get rid of the animal. Although most released exotic pets will die from starvation or be killed by a predator or a car, several species have the ability to thrive and reproduce in their new environment.
- Releasing an exotic pet into an unsuitable habitat is considered animal cruelty and charges can be laid.
- The following exotic pet and plant species are commonly released into the wild, they are able to become established and are now considered invasive species in BC:

- Goldfish
- Red Eared Slider Turtle
- Brazilian Elodea
- American Bullfrog
- Eurasian Watermilfoil
- Koi Carp
- European Rabbit
- Parrot's Feather



- All these species have had serious impacts on BC's native ecosystems and natural flora and fauna. Along with impacts on the environment, releasing invasive species has many economic and social impacts as well.
- Plants and animals should never be released into the wild. For information on actions to take, visit: www.bcinvassives.ca and www.bcinvassivesmonth.com.
- Any sightings of these or other invasive species should be reported to the local invasive species committee.

- A recent invasive species is feral pigs that escape or are let loose from farms, and destroy crops and vegetation, eat ground-nesting birds' eggs, and cause erosion.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT ISCBC:

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