

NEVER RELEASE

**AQUARIUM
PLANTS, ANIMALS
OR WATER**

**IT'S BAD FOR YOUR ANIMALS.
IT'S BAD FOR THE ENVIRONMENT.**

What are Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)?

Non-native aquatic plants and animals that cause or may cause harm to the economy, to the environment, and/or to human health by invading ecosystems.

What harm does AIS cause?

- Degrade aquatic habitats
- Outcompete native species
- Decrease biodiversity
- Alter food chains
- Introduce diseases
- Limit recreation
- Contaminate drinking water resources
- Necessitate expensive controls



Why shouldn't I release classroom plants and animals into the wild?

They can become invasive species if released. Some common aquatic invasive species include:

- Goldfish
- Red eared slider turtles
- Crayfish
- Elodea, hydrilla and other aquarium plants
- Chinese mystery snails



What if my classroom plant or animal is native to my region?

Even if your plant or animal is native to your region, it may carry diseases and should never be released.



What should I do with unwanted classroom plants, animals, and the materials they are shipped in?

Plants: Completely dry or freeze aquatic plants, then add them to a conventional garbage container. Composting should be avoided as seeds can still sprout.

Fish and invertebrates: Return to point of distribution or purchase, transfer them to another classroom for study, or find them a home with a responsible friend who will not release them.

Water: Add bleach to the water in which the organisms were shipped (5% solution). Put the solution into a toilet or sink, never a storm drain.

Packaging: Packaging materials like moss, paper, and plastic can also keep unwanted hitchhikers alive. Dispose of it in a conventional garbage container – do not compost or recycle.