

**Please  
don't turn it  
loose!**

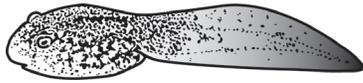


Wildlife  
in the  
Classroom  
or Laboratory

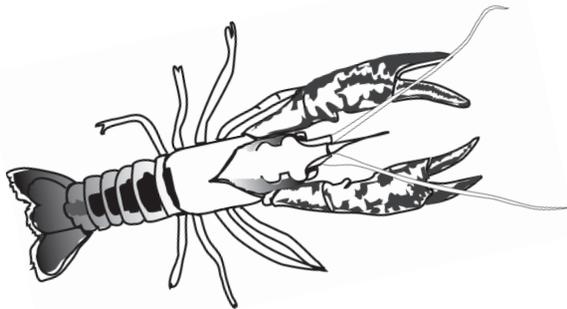


## Live Animals in the Classroom

Live animals are undeniably an essential and economical tool for teaching students about the natural world. Lessons on biodiversity, physiology, genetics, and animal behavior would be dull, if not impossible, without the use of live specimens.



**Bullfrog Tadpole**



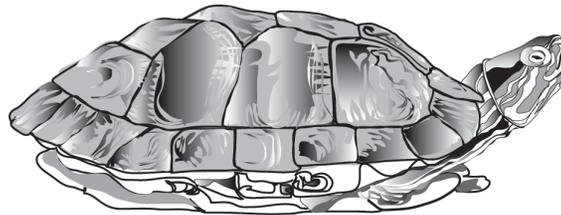
**Rusty crayfish**

Live animals in the classroom help to stimulate student curiosity, keep students focused during presentations, and promote respect for non-human animals and their ecosystems. Unfortunately, once the lesson plan or the school year is completed, many of the animals used in classrooms or laboratories are released into the wild.

## Why not release wildlife?

Releasing classroom pets or surplus laboratory specimens into the wild is prohibited in Oregon, and in all cases it is unethical. Once released into the wild, many of these unwanted animals negatively impact native species and their ecosystems. Releasing classroom pets or laboratory animals can result in:

- The introduction of harmful pathogens and parasites
- Increased competition with native/resident species for resources
- Predation on native/resident species
- Degradation of the native/resident population's gene pool.



**Red-eared slider**



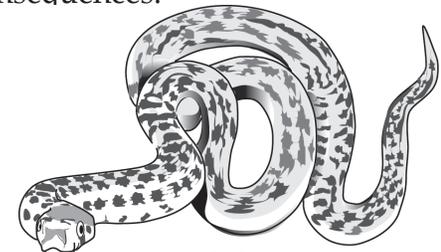
**Bullfrog**

## What should I do?

Instead of releasing unwanted classroom or laboratory animals into the wild, consider one of the following alternatives:

- Give the animal to another responsible teacher or school
- Return it to the place where it was bought
- Keep it as a classroom pet
- Donate it to your local natural history museum, science center, zoo or aquarium
- Humane euthanasia

All of these alternatives outweigh the risk of releasing captive animals into the wild. To avoid the problem of what to do with unwanted classroom or laboratory animals, think about what you will do with them before you obtain them. Although the release of "one little animal" into the wild may seem benign, that action could have serious biological and legal consequences.



**Snake**

**What should I consider before I bring an animal into the classroom or lab?**

1. Check to see if the animal you want to use is legal in Oregon. To find out, visit the ODFW Web site for the Wildlife Integrity Rules, Division 056 of the Oregon Administrative Rules, or call ODFW. Visit [www.dfw.state.or.us/OARs/index.asp](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/OARs/index.asp).
2. The Wildlife Integrity Rules has four classifications of animals: Animals Exempt; Prohibited Species; Noncontrolled Species; and Controlled Species. If the animal is listed as an Exempt or Non-Controlled species then you can proceed without a permit.
3. If the animal is listed as Prohibited or Controlled, you need to get a permit or follow specific rules before you can possess the animal or bring it into the state.
  - If the animal you want to use is listed as Prohibited, look on the Noncontrolled list and see if there is another animal that could be used.
  - If you still wish to use an animal listed as Prohibited, you will need to apply and receive authorization from ODFW before you can legally bring the animal into the state or the classroom.
  - Before you bring any animal into the classroom or lab consider the lifespan of the animal you want to use. Can you or someone else care for it under safe and humane conditions? Animals such as turtles and snakes have a very long life span.
  - What are you going to do with the animal after the experiment is over or the school year ends?

4. For information about euthanasia, please refer to the American Veterinary Medical Association Guidelines on Euthanasia, 2007. The guidelines are available on their Web site, [www.avma.org](http://www.avma.org).

**Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**Mission**

The mission of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is to protect and enhance Oregon's fish and wildlife and their habitats for use and enjoyment by present and future generations.

**Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife**

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[www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy)

This text was modified from the Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC) National Brochure No. 2, Version 1, "Don't Turn It Loose," with permission from PARC. [www.parcplace.org](http://www.parcplace.org)

*the* OREGON  
CONSERVATION  
STRATEGY



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**OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**