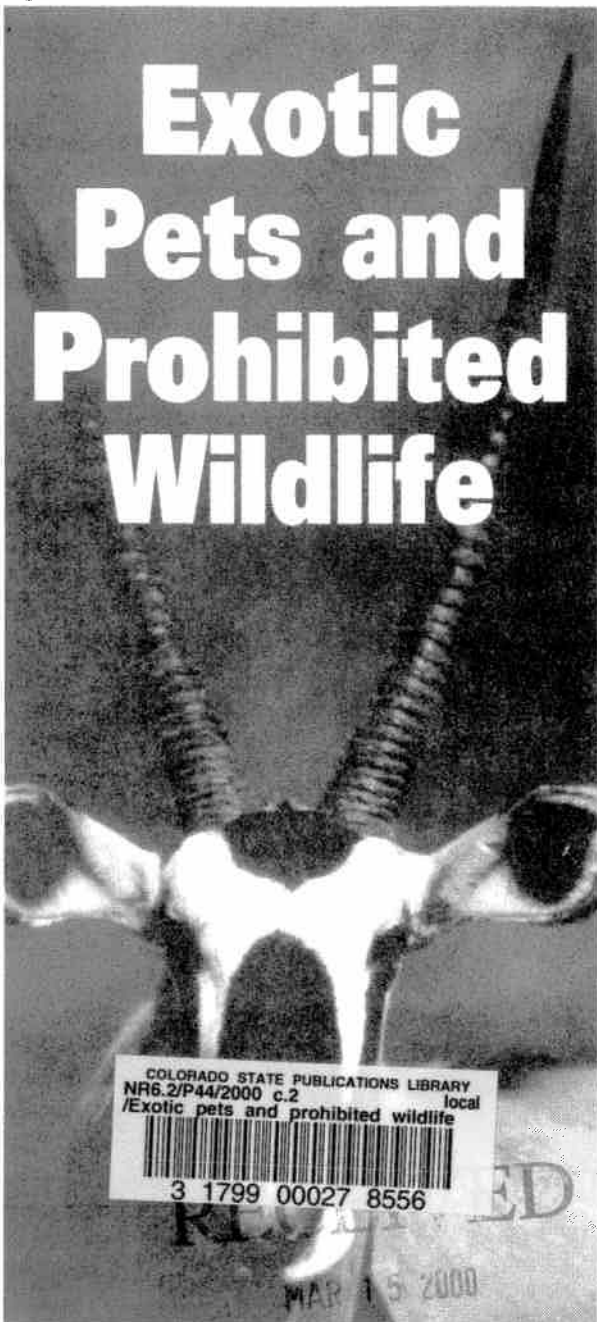


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Exotic Pets and Prohibited Wildlife

PHOTO OF GEMSBOK BY WENDY SHATTIL/BOB ROZINSKI ©



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COLORADO DIVISION OF WILDLIFE

6060 Broadway, Denver, CO 80216



RACCOON PHOTO BY IRENE VANDERMOLEN ©

The children were playing in a field near their foothills home when they spotted the tiny ball of fur huddled in a culvert. It was an infant raccoon, still soaking wet from the previous night's rain-storm. It couldn't have weighed more than a pound. Thinking the poor creature was orphaned, the

children carried it home and convinced their mom to let them care for it.

At first, the raccoon made wonderful pet. It was sweet, friendly, cuddly and playful. That didn't last long.

The raccoon began to grow larger and larger. Soon, it hit puberty, with its hormones raging and moods turning ugly. The animal got loose in the house and ripped everything in its path to shreds — pillows, shoes, toys, clothes. It snarled without provocation. It attacked and bit the family dog. Then one day, the raccoon bit a neighbor child. Fortunately the child received only minor injuries.

Much to the family's surprise, it's illegal to own raccoons in Colorado. These wild animals carry rabies and other diseases, and cannot be vaccinated. Consequently, the raccoon was turned over to the Division of Wildlife and had to be destroyed.

If you think having a wild animal for a pet would be fun, think again. This raccoon nightmare happens only too frequently in Colorado. And, the story is often replayed for families who adopt other wildlife species.

More people are becoming interested these days in owning exotic animals as pets. However, Colorado takes a conservative stance on private ownership of wildlife. This brochure will explain

state laws and regulations governing wildlife as pets — what's legal and illegal to own, and why.

In general, it is illegal to own wildlife in Colorado. You just cannot remove a wild animal from the woods and take it home. As a public resource, wildlife belongs to the state of Colorado.

In addition, there are numerous species you cannot have as pets, many of which are exotic or non-native animals. And then there are some animals you can have, but only with a specific license from the state.

There are many good reasons for these regulations, as complex as they may seem. Regulating wild animals falls under the jurisdiction of the Division of Wildlife, the Colorado Department of Health and the state Department of Agriculture. These agencies have adopted regulations with three main goals: ensuring public health and safety; protecting domestic livestock; and protecting the state's wildlife and wildlife resources.

From the Division of Wildlife's perspective,

Colorado's wild animals should stay wild. That's the philosophy behind prohibiting people from owning wildlife. Not only are many of our native wildlife species potentially dangerous, such as predators, they can spread diseases — to people and domestic animals.

Imported and exotic species brought into Colorado are regulated as well. Some are legal with permits; some are prohibited. The reasoning behind the regulations center on health and safety issues, primarily to prevent

spreading diseases to people, domestic pets, livestock and native wildlife.

The regulations also are aimed at protecting all animals from cruelty through negligence, overwork, mistreatment or lack of care.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

It is legal to have domestic animals, which aren't regulated by the Division of Wildlife. These animals must, however, comply with regulations of the state agriculture and health departments that deal with public and animal health. Here's a list of animals classified as domestic:



MOUNTAIN LION PHOTO BY ED KOSMICKI ©

COMMON NAME	Genus/Species
Alpaca	<i>Lama pacos</i>
Ass and donkey	<i>Equus asinus</i>
Bison	<i>Bison bison</i>
Camel	<i>Camelus bactrianus</i> and <i>Camelus dromedarius</i>
Cats	<i>Felis catus</i> , including hybrids with wild felids
Cattle	<i>Bos taurus</i> and <i>Bos indicus</i>
Chickens	<i>Gallus gallus</i>
Chinchilla	<i>Chincilla laniger</i>
Dogs	<i>Canis familiaris</i> , including hybrids with wild canids
Ducks	<i>Anatidae</i> , distinguishable morphologically from wild birds
Emu	<i>Dromieius</i> spp.
European ferrets	<i>Mustela putorius</i>
Fowl (Guinea)	<i>Numida meleagris</i>
Geese	<i>Anatidae</i> , distinguished morphologically from wild birds
Gerbils	<i>Meriones unguiculatus</i>
Goats	<i>Capra hircus</i>
Hamsters	<i>Mesocricetus</i> spp.
Horses	<i>Equus callabus</i> and hybrids with <i>Equus assinus</i>
Llama	<i>Lama glama</i>
Mice	<i>Mus musculus</i>
Mink	<i>Mustela vison</i>
Ostrich	<i>Struthio camelus</i>
Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>
Pig (Guinea)	<i>Cavia pocellus</i>
Pigeons	<i>Columbia livia</i>
Rabbits (European)	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>
Rats	<i>Rattus novegicus</i> and <i>Rattus rattus</i>
Rhea	<i>Rhea americana</i>
Reindeer	<i>Rangifer tarandus</i>
Sheep	<i>Ovis aries</i>
Swine	<i>Sus scofa domestica</i>
Turkeys	<i>Meleagris gallopavo</i> distinguished morpho- logically from wild birds
Yak	<i>Bos grunniens</i>

WILDLIFE YOU CAN OWN

Some animals sold commercially are considered exotic wildlife. The Division of Wildlife has created a category of species called Unregulated Wildlife. These are species that are legal to own, import or sell. You do not need a license from the Division of Wildlife to have one of these species. You must, however, comply with all other federal, state and local laws dealing with importation, disease and other issues.

LEGAL NON-MAMMALS

These are the non-mammal species that are legal to own in Colorado:

- All tropical and subtropical birds, including parrots, in the order Passeriformes.
- All tropical and subtropical fishes, including common gold fish and koi.
- All tropical and non-native subtropical frogs, toads, snakes and lizards. All venomous snakes require a license and proof of commercial use.
- All marine vertebrates and invertebrates, except anadromous and catadromous species.
- All tropical and non-native subtropical turtles. Caimens are legal. **Alligators and crocodiles require a license.**

Up to four individuals of each of the following species and/or subspecies of reptiles and amphibians may be taken annually and held in captivity, provided that no more than 12 in the aggregate may be possessed at any time.

COMMON NAME	Genus/Species
Plains spadefoot	<i>Spea bombifrons</i>
Woodhouse's toad	<i>Bufo woodhousii</i>
Western chorus frog	<i>Pseudacris triseriata</i>
Painted turtle	<i>Chrysemys picta</i>
Western box turtle	<i>Terrapena ornata</i>
Sagebrush lizard	<i>Sceloporus undulatus</i>
Tree lizard	<i>Urosaurus ornatus</i>
Side-blotched lizard	<i>Uta stansburiana</i>
Prairie & Plateau lizards	<i>Sceloporus undulatus</i>
Bullsnake	<i>Pituophus catenifer</i>
Western terrestrial garter snake	<i>Thamnophis elegans</i>
Plains garter snake	<i>Thamnophis radix</i>
Lesser earless lizard	<i>Holbrookia maculata</i>
Western whiptail	<i>Cnemidophorus tigris</i>
Racer	<i>Coluber constrictor</i>
Western hognose snake	<i>Heterodon nasicus</i>

LEGAL MAMMALS

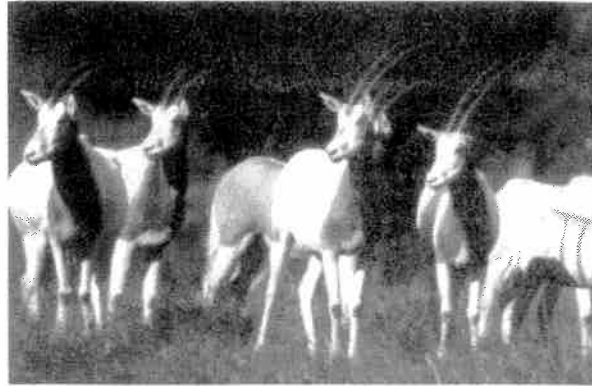
Elk and fallow deer are classified as alternative livestock and are licensed by the Department of Agriculture. Below are the other mammals that are legal to own in Colorado:

Common Name	Genus/species
African pygmy hedgehog	<i>Atelerix, Erinaceus; albiventris</i>
Red kangaroo	<i>Macropus rufus</i>
Short-tailed possum	<i>Monodelphis domestica</i>
Sugar gliders	<i>Petaurus breviceps</i>
Bennett wallaby	<i>Macropus rufogriseus</i>
Dama wallaby	<i>Macropus eugenii</i>
Swamp wallaby	<i>Wallabia bicolor</i>
Wallaroo	<i>Macropus robustus</i>

PROHIBITED SPECIES

These are the species that are illegal to have in Colorado. That means there are no licenses available to possess one of these species. There are several reasons why the state has prohibited them, ranging from concerns about damage to native wildlife or habitat to the potential for spreading diseases to livestock or people.

Common Name	Genus Species
Addax	<i>Addax nasomaculatus</i>
Aoudad	<i>Ammotragus lervia</i>
Blesbok	<i>Damalicus dorcas</i>
Barbary sheep	<i>Ammotragus lervia</i>
Brush-tailed possum	<i>Trichosurus vulpecula, arnhemensis, caninus</i>
Chamois	<i>Rupicapra rupicapra</i>
European hedgehogs	<i>Erinaceus spp. (except Erinaceus albiventris); Hemiechinus spp., Paraechinus spp.</i>
Gemsbok	<i>Oryx gazella</i>
Wild and exotic goats	<i>Capra spp. (all wild exotic goats and hybrids</i>
Goral	<i>Nemorhaedus goral</i>
Grouse, red, black and Capercaillae	Nonnative species of the subfamily <i>Tetraoninae</i>
Hartebeest	<i>Alcelaphus lichtensteini</i>
Ibex	<i>Capra ibex</i>
Markhor	<i>Capra falconeri</i>
Mouflon	<i>Ovis musimon</i>



SCIMITAR ORYX PHOTO BY WENDY SHATTIL/BOB ROZINSKI ©

Oryx	<i>Oryx dammah, leucoryx.</i>
Wild and exotic pigs	<i>Sus spp. (all wild pigs and hybrids)</i>
Primates	All non-human primates, i.e. monkeys, chimpanzees
Raccoon	<i>Procyon spp.</i>
Red deer	<i>Cervus elaphus elaphus (and hybrids)</i>
Sheep (wild exotic sheep and hybrids)	<i>Ovis spp.</i>
Striped skunks	<i>Mephitis mephitis.</i>
Tahr	<i>Hemitragus spp.</i>
Topi	<i>Damalicus lunatus</i>
White-tailed deer	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>
Wildebeest	<i>Connochaetes spp.</i>

Prohibited Fish and Amphibian

Common Name	Genus Species
Big head carp	<i>Aristichthys nobilis</i>
Bowfins	<i>Amiidae</i>
Gars	<i>Lepisosteidae</i>
Grass carp	
White amur	<i>Ctenopharyngodon idella</i>
Black amur	<i>Mylopharyngodon piceus</i>
Hybrid amur	<i>Ctenopharyngodon idella X Aristichthys nobilis</i>
Green frog	<i>Rana clamitans</i>
Indian carp	<i>Catla, rohu, Labeo rohita, mrigal, Cirrhinus mrigala</i>
Piranha	Including members of the genera <i>Serrasalmus, Roosevelthiella, and Pygocentrus</i>

Quagga mussels	<i>Dreissena bugensis Andrusov</i>
Rudd	<i>Scardinius erythrophthalmus</i>
Silver carp	<i>Hypophthalmichthys molitrix</i>
Snakeheads or murrels	Member of the genera <i>Channa</i> and <i>Ophicephalus</i>
Sticklebacks	Members of the genera <i>Apeltes, Aulorhynchus, Gasterosteus</i> and <i>Pungitius</i>
Tilapia	All species
Trahira	<i>Hoplias malabaricus</i>
Walking catfish	<i>Clarias batrachus</i>
Zebra mussels	<i>Dreissena polymorpha</i>

WILDLIFE THAT REQUIRE PERMITS

All other species of native and exotic wildlife require a license from either the Division of Wildlife or the state Department of Agriculture. To have or import one of these species, you must get a license first. You can get importation permits from the Department of Agriculture after obtaining a license from the Division of Wildlife.

•Wildlife Questions

Colorado Division of Wildlife — Mark Leslie
317 W. Prospect, Fort Collins, CO 80526
(970) 472-4300

•Alternative Livestock, Importations, Humane Care or Pet Questions — State Veterinarian's Office, Colorado Dept. of Agriculture
700 Kipling St., Suite 4000, Lakewood, CO 80215
(303) 239-4161.

•Human Health Questions — John Pape
Colorado Department of Public Health
4300 Cherry Creek Dr. South, Denver, CO 80222
(303) 692-2700

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