

What is PARC?

Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC), is a new multi-sector partnership dedicated to the conservation of herpetofauna (amphibians and reptiles) and their habitats. PARC was formed in 1998 to address these needs and to find solutions. PARC is composed of representatives from federal and state agencies, conservation organizations, museums, nature centers, universities, research laboratories, the forest products industry, the pet trade industry, and environmental consultants and contractors.

PARC is not a funding organization or a policy maker. PARC increases communication and cooperation among many diverse groups who are interested in the conservation of reptiles and amphibians. PARC enables each and every person and group involved to become more aware of national and regional issues confronting amphibians and reptiles. PARC also gives individuals a better idea of how they, or their agency or organization, can contribute to conservation of herpetofauna and their habitats. The diversity of participants makes PARC the most comprehensive conservation effort ever undertaken for amphibians and reptiles.

The PARC Mission:

"To conserve amphibians, reptiles, and their habitats as integral parts of our ecosystem and culture through proactive and coordinated public/private partnerships."

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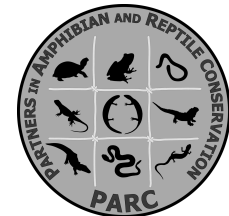
Please...

Don't turn it loose!



Bullfrog

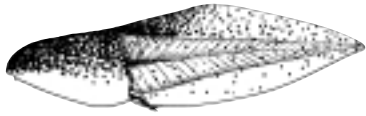
Information on how to properly dispose of unwanted classroom or laboratory specimens.



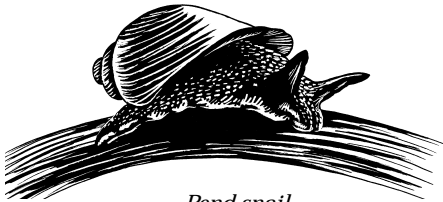
www.parcplace.org

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



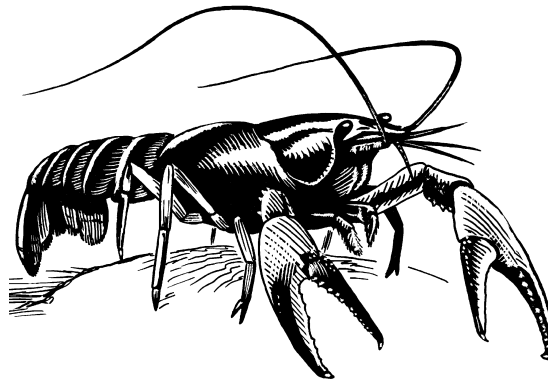
Pond snail

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.

What's the problem?

Releasing classroom pets or surplus laboratory specimens into the wild may be prohibited in your state, 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 into the wild can result in:

- the introduction of harmful pathogens and parasites;
- increased competition with native/resident species for resources;
- predation on native/resident species; and
- degradation of the native/resident population's gene pool.



Northern crayfish

How can you help?

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 until the next semester; or
- donate it to your local natural history museum, science center, zoo, or aquarium; and
- 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.

Please don't turn it loose!