

## RELATED LAWS ON EXOTIC AND NATIVE WILD ANIMALS

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper is submitted in an effort to acquaint the personnel of allied State agencies with related laws which control the public and private possession of live exotic and native wild animals.

The need for this common knowledge of related laws by agencies with law enforcement responsibility is readily apparent when the annual number and related problems from imported or resident wild animals in California are examined.

In addition to resident wild animal populations, millions of fish and thousands of mammals, birds, and reptiles enter California each year through the utilization of most methods of transportation.

Most of these imported animals are exotic species from foreign lands which cannot be readily identified and pose various degrees of potential and actual threat to native wild life, agriculture, and public health if they are introduced into the wilds of this State.

For the purpose of this report, a general picture of imported exotic animals is presented in an introduction, and specific animals with related laws are treated individually under the headings of current laws and future regulations.

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### INTRODUCTION

Nearly 73,694,996 live fish and about 4,359,996 other animals were imported into the United States during 1969. A breakdown of actual figures reveals 73,694,996 fish; 1,938,533 shellfish; 1,393,970 reptiles; 571,663 birds; 339,489 amphibians; and 116,341 mammals<sup>1</sup>. This was an increase of about 20% over 1968.

The live fish imports were mostly tropical fish for home aquariums. However, included were several exotic freshwater species such as piranha, garfish, and walking catfish, which California considers as an extremely potential menace to our native game fish species in State waters or agricultural farm ponds if these exotic fish were to be introduced and become established in our State's freshwater lakes and streams. I do not suggest that the introduction of exotic fishes would be intentional, but could very possibly occur accidentally by a well-meaning public through flushing the fish down a drain or releasing into a lake or stream instead of actually destroying them.

The imported reptiles included large numbers of lizards, snakes (poisonous as well as nonpoisonous), and turtles of species which are frequently favored as pets and also are often valuable in scientific experiments. California prohibits the importation of all species of the family Crocodylidae by private citizens, but permits the importation, under Department permit, by zoological gardens or public aquariums for exhibition purposes. We also protect the desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii) and the diamond back terrapin. Our restrictions on Gopherus agassizii are necessary to enforce our protection of this tortoise species within California. As many of you know, a similar tortoise, Gopherus berlandieri is currently imported extensively from neighboring States and Mexico for sale to the public as a pet.

Frogs and toads which were used primarily in educational research comprised most of the amphibians imported. This State prohibits the importation of the giant or marine toad (Bufo marinus) by private individuals due to the extremely toxic poison contained within this amphibian. This poison causes temporary blindness and extreme pain if gotten into the eyes. Farm dogs which are used to tend livestock would no doubt be victims if this species became established in the wilds of this State. Permits to public aquariums or public zoological gardens are authorized.

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<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of the Interior, Wildlife Imported Into The United States In 1969, February, 1970.

Most of the imported mammals consisted of primates but also included fruit bats, coatis, kinkajous, opossums, gerbils, squirrels, sheep, goats, wild swine, deer, and antelope. Other members of the Mustelidae or Sciuridae families are also imported. Most of these mammals pose definite health or agricultural threats and habitat competition for our native wildlife species, and will be discussed further a little later in this presentation.

The importation of birds included many species of hawks or owls which through identification problems hampered Department efforts to protect our native raptors. Most of you are aware of the overall agricultural advantages which accrue from the pest control by hawks or owls even though an occasional bird must be destroyed due to behavior which is detrimental to specific types of agricultural pursuits.

Los Angeles and San Francisco are the most important ports for the entry of exotic wild animals into California, and are exceeded in importance only by New York and Miami in the United States.

The concern for native wildlife in California due to this large influx of exotic wildlife has resulted in legislative and regulatory Commission actions to restrict the importation, transportation, possession or release within this State of those exotic wild animals which pose a potential threat through displacement or competition for habitat with our native wildlife species. Fish and game legislative action is contained in Sections 2116 through 2196, and Section 12000 of the California Fish and Game Code. Our Fish and Game Commission regulations are found in Sections 671 through 671.7 of Title 14, California Administrative Code. All of these laws and regulations are set forth in booklets which may be obtained from the Department of Fish and Game or the Department of Agriculture.

These booklets also include Federal regulations on the importation of wildlife or their eggs and descriptive material of some species of exotic wildlife which are restricted from entry into this State.

Provisions for scientific or public health research under Department permit with the concurrence of the Departments of Public Health and Agriculture have been authorized by the Fish and Game Commission. The general authority for these permits is found in Section 671.1, Title 14, California Administrative Code. This section is found on page 13 of the booklet previously mentioned.

#### CURRENT LAWS

Fruit bats, coatimundis, kinkajous, gerbils, mouflons - strange words, new terms - but related to a serious control problem to which the Wildlife Protection Branch of the Department of Fish and Game has assigned a fairly high priority. This priority in your agency or organization may be different, but I'm sure that you will agree that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Consider these basic reasons for the restriction of specific animals into this State<sup>1</sup>.

Basic competition may result with agriculture. Some animals would destroy crops or otherwise impair agricultural production. Such agricultural competition also would apply to livestock. In addition to direct competition with crops or livestock, the very important factor of an introduction of disease should also be a consideration in restrictions on the importation of exotic and perhaps native animals.

Wild animal importations could also be of serious concern to public health. Importation of animals with diseases that could be transmitted to human beings should be restricted.

Competition may develop with native wildlife for food, habitat, or other ecological necessities. Once again, the introduction of exotic diseases to native wildlife should be considered.

Consider the destructive habits of these more common restricted exotic wild animals<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Committee to review prohibited species regulations, Minutes of Mammal Sub-Committee, April 25, 1967.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Fish and Game and Department of Agriculture, Laws and Regulations Governing the Importation, Transportation, and Possession of Live Wild Animals.

## HAMSTERS AND GERBILS

Hamsters and gerbils are a destructive group of rodents of many species, varying in size from house mouse size to that of small squirrels. All species are a menace to agriculture, in that they eat bark, grains, fruits, bulbs, and roots. They burrow extensively causing water loss and erosion. We are particularly fearful of the large number of Golden Hamsters being raised commercially in the State as well as kept as pets by many people. It is hoped that they never become established in the wild.

Gerbils which resemble our native kangaroo mice, although gerbils are much larger, are being used for scientific research purpose in increasing numbers each year. Strict controls are placed in permits issued to research centers to prevent any gerbils from escaping into the wild. Gerbils are sold in other states as pets, but none may be imported or possessed in California for this purpose. At least one other state now has a problem with escaped gerbils.

## OPOSSUM

The common Virginia opossum may be imported into California, but other species of opossums are barred. Opossums in general are predatory as well as omnivorous. Fruit, eggs, chickens, and other domestic and wild species of birds and animals are eaten. The opossum from the eastern United States is already firmly established in California, but there are many other members of this family in various sizes found south of the United States and throughout most of South America.

## MONGOOSE

All members of the mongoose family are extremely destructive to other species of birds and mammals. Hawaii introduced the mongoose to destroy the rats, but this State has lost most of its native land birds due in part to the depredations of the mongoose. They still have the rats.

## RODENTS

A few species are mentioned in particular such as the Bank Vole because of its burrowing in canal and ditch banks, as well as its destruction of vegetal forage; the Field Voles because of their destruction of crops and numerous networks of burrows; the Water Rat because of burrows in canal banks and levees and heavy damage to agricultural crops; the Long-tailed Field Mouse because it is extremely adaptable and wide ranging from the low flat-land well up into the higher mountains and its destruction of many kinds of domestic crops, as well as stored grains, fruits, and root crops.

## RABBITS

The European Rabbit is particularly destructive to grape vines in its foraging upon the tender new shoots and its bark eating propensities during the winter, as are our own cottontails and varying hares.

## HOODED CROW, CARRION CROW AND ROOK

The Hooded Crow, the Carrion Crow, and the Rook are all under careful restriction due to their obvious crow-like food habits. All are egg and nestling destroyers, as well as grain, nut and fruit eaters. Our native raven also shows a preference for eggs and nestlings at times.

## SKYLARK

The Skylark is restricted because of its habit, similar to our own horned lark, of eating seedling beans, lettuce, carrots and many other garden and farm crops. Due to a tendency to gather in large flocks, the losses can be considerable.

Other species could be mentioned. For instance, the red-wiskered bul-bul, a fruit eater, has recently appeared on the scene in Los Angeles. However, either the point is made for the priority on the control of these exotic foreigners or it is not.

"Controls" are imposed on all importations of live mammals, birds, fish (including mollusks and crustacea), amphibians, reptiles, or the offspring or eggs of any of the foregoing into the United States. This means that these animals are either prohibited or granted entry only for a specific purpose under special permits.

All such importations are subject to health, quarantine, agriculture, Customs, fish and game, or other requirements imposed by law or regulations of an authorized Federal, Territorial, State, or Municipal agency.

The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, U. S. Department of the Interior, administers the Lacey Act which was enacted by Congress and governs the importation of foreign wildlife. Rules and regulations are set forth in the Federal Register, Title 50, Chapter 1, Part 17.

Several ports of entry are designated including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Calexico, and San Diego San Ysidro. Endangered foreign fish and wildlife are listed and conditions to comply with federal laws during the importation of wild animals are prescribed.

The usual federal procedure consists of entry through a designated port, a properly executed "Declaration for the Importation of Fish or Wildlife" (Form 3-177) filed with the District Director of Customs at the port of entry, documentation that the wild animals were legally acquired and exported in accordance with applicable laws at the point of origin, and adequate marking of containers. The importation of Federally endangered species requires, in addition, a permit from the Director, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240. The Regional Director of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife shall arrange for the disposition of wildlife which is forfeited to the United States.

California fish and game regulations on the importation of exotic and native wild animals are set forth in Section 671, Title 14, California Administrative Code which was enacted by the California Fish and Game Commission. This section and related importation information are summarized in a Department publication entitled "Laws and Regulations Governing the Importation, Transportation, and Possession of Live Wild Animal...."

One court test on the legality of State fish and game laws on the importation of exotic wild animals which may interest you was the Adams v. Shannon case. This case was initiated in the Long Beach Superior Court in 1965. Two principal contentions were advanced by the defendant--piranha posed no potential threat to native wildlife and the Commission had no right to regulate tropical fish. A favorable verdict was rendered in favor of the State in 1968. The State District Court of Appeals upheld this decision in 1970.

Regulations for the importation of fish (including amphibians and crustacea) are also found in Department Informational Leaflets No. 16 and No. 17.

The importation of restricted exotic and native wild animals into California requires one of two procedures. The Department of Fish and Game may issue a permit upon agreement with the State Department of Public Health and the State Department of Agriculture for species which may be possessed as pets by individuals or possessed by specified institutions for research or exhibition purposes. The California Fish and Game Commission may authorize the importation of totally prohibited species under such terms and conditions as are necessary for control purposes.

Native fish (including amphibians and crustacea) may be imported under standard Department of Fish and Game licenses or permits.

The usual procedure for a Department of Fish and Game permit consists of a written request from an individual or agency, agreement by Fish and Game, Public Health, and Agriculture on the issuance of a permit, and inspection of the facilities for adequate security to prevent escape. Commission approval for a totally prohibited species requires a written request to the Commission, recommendations for or against the permit by the Departments of Fish and Game, Public Health, and Agriculture, a public hearing on the matter, and approval by the Commission.

Prohibited species of wild animals which are illegally imported must be shipped out of State, returned to the point of origin, or destroyed at the option of the owner under the direction and control of a Department wildlife protection officer.

A related law, Section 6304 of the California Agriculture Code, prohibits the importation into this State of any form of animal life which is detrimental to agriculture. Any such animal shall be refused entry and shall be immediately destroyed or shipped out of the State within 48 hours at the option and expense of the owner or bailee of the animal.

Federal health laws including quarantine requirements on the importation of dogs, cats, monkeys, and psittacine birds may be obtained from the Chief, Foreign Quarantine Program, National Communicable Disease Center, Atlanta, Georgia 30333. State health laws on the importation of these animals may be obtained from Dr. George Humphrey, Department of Public Health, Berkeley, California 94704, and are found in the California Health and Safety Code and Title 17, California Administrative Code.

Other Federal laws on the importation of pets which are classified as poultry or domestic animals other than dogs, cats, monkeys, or psittacine birds may be obtained from The Agricultural Research Service, Animal Health Division, Import-Export Animals and Products, Hyattsville, Maryland 20782. State laws on the above pets may be obtained from the State Department of Agriculture, 1220 N Street, Sacramento, California 95814.

You should also be aware of those specific animals which the California Legislature has designated as fully protected<sup>1</sup> and which the Fish and Game Commission has declared rare or endangered<sup>2</sup>.

These fully protected and rare or endangered wildlife species may not be taken, possessed, imported, or sold except under Department permit as prescribed by the Legislature or Fish and Game Commission.

Another related Fish and Game Commission regulation deals with the confinement of live mountain lions<sup>3</sup> and live injured or diseased game birds, protected nongame birds, or game mammals<sup>4</sup>. The possession of live mountain lions requires a valid game breeder's license. Designated injured or diseased wildlife may only be possessed for a specified temporary period under a Department permit for treatment of the injury or disease.

#### NEW AND PROPOSED REGULATIONS

On February 1, 1972, the Secretary of the Interior announced a proposal to amend Title 50, Part 17, Appendix A of the Code of Federal Regulations<sup>5</sup>.

The proposed amendment would add to the "U. S. List of Endangered Foreign Fish and Wildlife" the following species of mammals:

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Where Found</u>
Cheetah .....	Africa, Asia Minor, India
Leopard .....	Africa, Asia Minor, India, Southeast Asia, Korea
Tiger .....	Central Asia, China and Korea, to India, Indonesia and Malaysia
Snow Leopard .....	Central Asia
Jaguar .....	Central and South America
Ocelot .....	Central and South America
Margay .....	Central and South America
Tiger Cat .....	Costa Rica to northern South America

<sup>1</sup>Fish and Game Code Sections 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515.

<sup>2</sup>Section 670.5, Title 14, California Administrative Code, and Fish and Game Code Section 3005.5.

<sup>3</sup>Section 251.5(d), Title 14, California Administrative Code, and Fish and Game Code Section 3005.5.

<sup>4</sup>Section 251.5(e), Title 14, California Administrative Code.

<sup>5</sup>Federal Register, Volume 37, No. 23 - Thursday, February 3, 1972.

Consistent with the foregoing proposal, and in recognition of the fact that by listing the species, the law will apply to their subspecies as well, it is further proposed to amend the "U. S. List of Endangered Foreign Fish and Wildlife" by deleting the following subspecies of the species named above:

<u>Common Name</u>	<u>Where Found</u>
Asiatic Cheetah .....	U.S.S.R., Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan (formerly India, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia)
Sinai Leopard .....	Sinai, Saudi Arabia
Barbary Leopard .....	Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia
Anatolian Leopard .....	Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Turkey, Syria
Bali Tiger .....	Bali (Indonesia)
Javan Tiger .....	Indonesia
Caspian Tiger .....	Russia, Afghanistan, Iran
Sumatran Tiger .....	Indonesia

Interested persons are invited to submit written comments, suggestions, or objections concerning the proposed amendments, to the Director, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240, within 30 days of the date of publication of this notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

In addition the Federal Government is currently discussing with Mexico a possible revision of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act between the two countries. It is possible as a result of these discussions that the international shipment of raptorial birds and also birds of the family Corvidae will be further curtailed.

A number of changes in State fish and game laws which will be applicable to our related enforcement efforts have already become effective in 1972. Other changes have been introduced for 1972 legislative action or proposed for Fish and Game Commission consideration during this year.

SB 524 which became effective March 4, 1972, provides that it will be unlawful for any person to knowingly capture for sale, transport for sale or sell wild rodents. This new law will prohibit the capturing of chipmunks and golden-mantled ground squirrels in California for sale in pet shops. Other laws and regulations prohibit the importation of rodents for such purpose; consequently, after the effective date of SB 524 it will be unlawful for rodents to be sold for use as pets anywhere in California. The law does not prohibit a private individual from capturing a rodent for his own use as a pet, nor the capturing of rodents for sale for scientific research purposes, and a further exemption covers muskrats and beavers<sup>1</sup>. This bill was sponsored by the California Department of Public Health, and was designed to prevent the spread of bubonic plague within California and to minimize the possibility of this disease being contracted by human beings.

Several major changes have been made in the Fish and Game Code by AB 2408. Birds and mammals formerly classified as nonprotected species have been reclassified as nongame birds and nongame mammals, and none may be taken or possessed except as provided by the Code or by regulations of the Fish and Game Commission. Also, a license is now required to take any bird or mammal, and as of March 4, 1972, a hunter may not take a coyote, bobcat, ground squirrel, bluejay, crow, or any other previously nonprotected bird or mammal without having a hunting license. An exemption is provided for landowners who may take nongame birds or mammals without a license if the animals are causing damage to their property. A major point in AB 2408 is a revision of Section 3000 of the Fish and Game Code which makes it unlawful to take any bird or mammal, except a nongame mammal, at night, except as otherwise provided in the Code or by Commission regulations; however, the law further provides that the Commission may adopt regulations prohibiting the taking of any nongame mammals at night. The changes made to the Fish and Game Code by AB 2408 do not diminish the previous rights of landowners, or officers or employees when acting in their official capacities, in taking birds or mammals which are found to be injuring growing crops or other property or are classed as pests as specified in the Agricultural Code<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Fish and Game Code Sections 2575 and 2576.

<sup>2</sup>Fish and Game Code Sections 3007; 3800; 3801; 3801.5; 3801.6; 4150; 4152; 4153; 4154.

Section 3012 of the Fish and Game Code has been amended by SB 701 to make unlawful the use of any recorded or electrically amplified bird or mammal calls, or sounds or imitations thereof, to assist in taking any bird or mammal. A major effect of this bill is that the so-called "varmint" hunters will no longer be able to use records of animal sounds or calls, or electrically amplified equipment to assist in taking animals such as coyotes, bobcats, and foxes. This law will not become effective until July 1, 1972.

Section 3003.5 of the Fish and Game Code was amended by AB 455 to provide that it is unlawful to pursue, drive, or herd any bird or mammal with any motorized water, land or air vehicle, including but not limited to a motor vehicle, airplane, powerboat, or snowmobile. Exemptions are provided so that a landowner or tenant on private property may drive or herd game mammals for the purpose of preventing damage by such mammals to private property. Birds and mammals may also be herded under the terms of a permit issued by the Department under Commission regulations. The new law also exempts persons in the pursuit of agriculture.

AB 660 became effective on March 4, 1972, and provides a four-year moratorium on the taking of mountain lions for sport purposes. The bill requires the Department to conduct a continuous special study of mountain lions to ascertain the number of mountain lions in California, and to determine the best methods of providing sound management of this resource. The Department is further required to prepare a plan which will insure survival of mountain lions, and to implement the plan at the end of the four-year moratorium period. AB 660 provides that the owner or tenant of land or property, or the agent of such owner or tenant, may be issued a permit to kill mountain lions that are damaging or destroying property. Such a permit would be valid for a period of only 10 days, but the permittee would be authorized to take or have taken the depredating mountain lion up to 10 miles from the location of the damage or destruction. A person taking a mountain lion under a depredation permit would be required to report such taking within five days, and also to deliver the head and hide of the lion to the Department within five days after taking the animal. AB 660 has no emergency clause; therefore, the current mountain lion season ended as scheduled on February 29, 1972.<sup>1</sup>

Section 332 of the Fish and Game Code has been amended by SB 722 to prohibit the Commission from authorizing any special tule elk hunt until the statewide population of these animals exceeds 2,000, or it is determined by the Legislature from a report to be submitted by the Department in 1974 that suitable areas cannot be found in this State to accommodate a population of 2,000 tule elk in a healthy condition. The new law provides that the number of tule elk in the Owens Valley shall not be permitted to increase beyond 490 animals, unless it is hereafter determined by the Department, in accordance with game management principles, that the Owens Valley holding capacity can be increased. The bill provides that Department personnel may cull sick or inferior tule elk from the herds, but this may be done only for the protection, enhancement, and healthy increase of the species. Other terms in the new law require the Department to relocate tule elk in areas suitable to them in the State of California and to cooperate to the maximum extent possible with Federal and local agencies and private property owners in relocating tule elk in suitable areas under their jurisdiction or ownership.

Section 4500.5 has been added to the Fish and Game Code, to provide that it is unlawful to take any seal, except that any fisherman while engaged in fishing from a boat at sea may take any seal which is damaging his nets, tackle, or fish.

AB 1162 also adds Section 653(q) to the Penal Code to make it unlawful for any person to import into this State for commercial purposes, or to sell, the dead body, or any part or product thereof, of any seal. The terms of AB 1162 will not affect the capturing of seals or sea lions for scientific or exhibitional purposes under permits issued by the Department in accordance with Commission regulations.

Section 653(o) of the Penal Code was amended by SB 1614 to add several animals to the existing list of those which may not be sold dead. It is now unlawful to import into this State for commercial purposes, to possess with the intent to sell, or to sell the dead body, or any part or product thereof, of any alligator, crocodile, polar bear, leopard, ocelot, tiger, cheetah, jaguar, sable antelope, wolf, zebra, whale, cobra, python, sea turtle, colobus monkey, kangaroo, vicuna, sea otter, free-roaming feral horse, or Spanish lynx.

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<sup>1</sup>Fish and Game Code Sections 3005.7, and 4850 through 4854; also, Section 455, Title 14, California Administrative Code.

The following Department proposals have been introduced for legislative consideration during the 1972 legislative session: AB 427 (Seeley) - Protection of Reptiles; AB 426 (Seeley) - Protection of the California Desert Tortoise.

None of the following amphibians may be taken or possessed at any time under Fish and Game Commission regulations which became effective on March 1, 1972: Santa Cruz long-toed salamander; Siskiyou mountain salamander; desert slender salamander; Kern Canyon slender salamander; Tehachapi slender salamander; Limestone salamander; Shasta salamander; and black toad<sup>1</sup>.

A year-long season for the take of California reptiles has also been prescribed by the Fish and Game Commission<sup>2</sup>. This regulation became effective on March 1, 1972, and also imposed the following bag and possession limits, hours of take, and methods of take: Banded gecko - Two; Desert iguana - Two; Chuckwalla - One; Fringe-toed lizard - Two; collared lizard - Two; Long-nosed leopard lizard - Two; Blunt-nosed leopard lizard - Zero; Horned lizard - Two; California legless lizard - One; Gila monster - Zero; Southern rubber boa - Zero; Rosy boa - One; San Joaquin whipsnake - One; Alameda striped racer - Zero; California mountain kingsnake - One; San Francisco garter snake - Zero; Giant garter snake - Zero; Two-striped garter snake - One; Desert Tortoise - Zero; Other reptiles - No limit. (Colorado River-Salton Sea area has special regulations for Sonora and Yellow mud turtles.) HOURS - Reptiles may be taken at any time of day or night. METHODS OF TAKE - Reptiles may be taken only by hand, or hand-operated snares which will not cause injury to the reptiles, except that rattlesnakes may be taken by any method.

In accordance with the authorization in AB 2408, the Fish and Game Commission on March 3, 1972, adopted regulations which prohibit night hunting in the western portion of the San Joaquin Valley. This closure corresponds to the habitat of the rare San Joaquin kit fox. Night hunting on private lands in the balance of the State was also prohibited except that landowners and their tenants or permittees may take nongame mammals at night on property under their ownership or control. Permits issued by landowners or tenants shall state that the permittee has permission to trespass at night on property under the ownership or control of such landowners or tenants<sup>3</sup>.

The Fish and Game Commission has also published notice to amend Section 671 of Title 14, California Administrative Code, to add other specific animals as prohibited exotic wildlife species in this State.

Tiger fish. This is an extremely aggressive and pugnacious fish. If released into California waters, it would undoubtedly prey on desirable species and could cause problems with our threatened forms. This fish is little used in the aquarium trade, being unsatisfactory because of rapid growth.

African clawed frog. This animal has been imported in large number for medical use in pregnancy tests. With the development of other techniques in recent years, their medical use has declined. Wild populations have been discovered in southern California. Because Xenopus feeds voraciously on a wide variety of small aquatic animals, it is potentially harmful to warmwater fisheries and native species of aquatic and semi-aquatic vertebrates.

Snapping turtles. These turtles feed on a great variety of aquatic and semi-aquatic animals, including the eggs of fish and amphibians. They could cause considerable damage if introduced into California waters.

Cobras and coral snakes; Adders and vipers; Pit vipers, except native rattlesnakes. All of these snakes are venomous, and nearly all are potentially capable of inflicting serious injury on careless handlers and bystanders. This is especially true of elapids, vipers, and certain pit vipers for which appropriate medical treatment is generally not readily available. Several native rattlesnakes on the other hand, are frequently encountered and captured. They are relatively easy to manage in captivity, and effective medical treatment for bites is readily available in most areas.

<sup>1</sup>Section 17, Title 14, California Administrative Code.

<sup>2</sup>Section 17.7, Title 14, California Administrative Code.

<sup>3</sup>Section 470, Title 14, California Administrative Code.



Some of the very bad Australian snakes are live bearers which produce up to 80 young. The implications of the possible establishment of wild populations of some of these venomous reptiles for California animals (hawks, owls, raccoons, badgers, etc.) which eat snakes, and also for domestic animals and agriculturists are obvious.

In conclusion, the State Department of Public Health is contemplating restrictions on the various turtles which are sold by pet stores to the general public. This restriction is due to the incidence of Salmonella in those individuals who have handled the turtles.