



**Habitattitude**™

PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT  
DO NOT RELEASE FISH AND AQUATIC PLANTS

PIAAC • U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE • NOAA'S SEA GRANT

[www.Habitattitude.net](http://www.Habitattitude.net)

# Get Habitattitude!

## Do you have unwanted aquarium pets and plants? How about live study specimens?

If you own an aquarium or water garden — what do you do with unwanted aquarium pets and plants? What about live study specimens from the classroom?

### Never release them into the wild!

Many of us may have disposed of unwanted aquarium fish, plants, snails, crayfish, frogs, turtles by releasing them into local waters, flushing them down the toilet, or maybe allowing them to escape. Students and teachers may release unwanted live study specimens. It seems simple and kindhearted, but these are inappropriate actions and there are better solutions.

Release or escape of unwanted aquarium fish, plants, reptiles as well as study specimens can harm Minnesota waters and native species. Besides not being good for our lakes and rivers, it is illegal in Minnesota. Fish and other animals like crayfish can carry diseases that can kill native species. Invasive plants can clog waterways and snag boat propellers. Recent examples of releases in Minnesota include: piranha, pacu, rusty crayfish, water hyacinth, water lettuce, Amazonian catfish, koi, goldfish, yellow iris, red-eared slider turtle, and even a cayman!

Getting a **Habitattitude** helps provide alternatives to release into the wild.

### Alternatives to Release:

- Contact a retailer for proper handling advice or for possible returns
- Give or trade with another aquarist, pond owner, or water gardener
- Donate to a local aquarium society, school, or aquatic business
- Seal aquatic plants in plastic bags and dispose in the trash
- Contact a veterinarian or pet retailer for guidance on humane disposal of animals

*Habitattitude Surrender* events are held in spring and fall. Surrendered fish, plants, and reptiles can be dropped off to be rehomed. For the next event near you, check out <http://www.seagrant.umn.edu/news/>.



For more information, visit <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/Habitattitude/index.html> or call 218.726.8712.