

# Animals of invasive species represent a threat to natural diversity

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Invazīvās sugas

Translated by machine translator



Invasive Species is one of the most significant threats to biodiversity in the world. They have a devastating impact on nature: they threaten local species, change ecosystem functions, cause economic damage, and individual species are also hazardous to human health. . Although invasive species are not allowed to be imported, stored and distributed throughout the European Union<sup>1</sup>, individuals of individual invasive species are kept in Latvia as a pet animal. I. The Nature Protection Board calls for a careful examination of whether it is not an invasive species prior to the purchase of a new pet animal to prevent its unintentional introduction or distribution.

Invasive species can be consulted by the Invasive Species Manager – an Internet site where everyone can explore nearly 50 invasive plant and animal species – both those included in the EU regulation and those recognised by Latvian scientists as infest<sup>2</sup> – alien species that rapidly breed and spread, endangering local species and biodiversity.

Also, the Sarkanaušu turtle (*Trachemys scripta elegans*) and other subspecies of the *Trachemys scripta*), and the raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), which is kept as pet animals in Latvia, are invasive species.

The red-sea turtle has been imported into Latvia as a pet animal, since the world has been widely bred and distributed for such purposes. . Its home country is North America, from which it has been exported to trade in global zoostores and food in East Asia. The species gained popularity on the domestic market due to their low prices, the small size of their babies, and the beautiful, light-green coloring of their armor. However, tortoise owners have to count on the fact that the beautiful colouring of armor is disappearing as the turtle grows and that they live up to 50 years m. Unfortunately, that is why people often get rid of these animals by launching them into the wild. In Latvia, a turtle grown up in nature can make good, but for the time being, due to the climatic patterns, the eggs cannot be found successfully. . They are the most edible and food of plant material - leaves of coastal and aquatic plants, seeds, straw and algae, and of invertebrates - molluscs, dragonfly larvae, bladders, wind m. In competing for

food and life space, a red-tailed turtle threatens our local protected swamp turtle. . Also red turtles are important carriers of parasites and diseases I. Together with this turtle, four species of parasites have entered the European fauna that infect the local swamp turtle. . The red-sea turtle is also a vector for local parasites (nematodes or velenic worms), as well as salmonellosis.

LIFE-IP LatViaNature Invasive Species expert Santa Rutkovska explains that these species are not yet breeding in Latvia, but climate change is a concern. . It is therefore important to “remove” each specimen of this species from the wild in order to reduce the risk that someone resumes and begins to reproduce, since it will be very difficult to stop the infestation. I. According to the data provided by our partners, over the last three years Latgale Zoo has adopted on average 20 red-sea turtles per year from the population, while Riga Zoological Gardens – on average 25. However, not all the turtles that have become a burden for the owner come to the zoos – sometimes they are found in garbage cans, forests, urban parks, in the lakesides.

The homeland of the raccoon is North America. . The first raccoons introduced in Europe were deliberately launched in Germany in 1927, where they began to form wild populations. U. In Latvia, the raccoon has not yet been observed in the wild, but has already been detected in Lithuania. In some places, raccoons have also escaped from fur farms, zoos and people's residences where they are kept as pets. . In Latvia, some raccoons are also kept as domestic animals.

The raccoon is an ecologically plastic species, i.e. . adapting easily to different conditions of life m. It rises well in trees, floats, often in the vicinity of human accommodation, where it is easier to obtain food, particularly when food waste or pet food is available. . Raccoons are the most edible, so their diet is very diverse: nuts, berries, fruit (including fruit orchards), plant leaves, seeds, insects, snails, crustaceans, eggs, fish, amphibians, birds, small mammals I. Thanks to the well-developed capacity to climb trees, the impact of the raccoon is wider than that of most European predators. . Raccoons in the natural range are one of the most important vector for rabies m. They also carry over 12 pathogens (e.g. leptospirosis, tularaemia, tuberculosis, listeriosis, encephalitis) and a whole range of endoparasitits that can cause diseases in other species, including humans.

The Nature Conservation Board recalls that the release of captive animals into the wild is prohibited. . We therefore call for such a pet animal to be burdened, not to be released into the wild, but to be delivered to the zoo or animal shelter, or to contact the Authority and to agree on their removal. We also call for reporting of any observed armor in the wild I. On the other hand, before purchasing an animal of wild species, we recommend carefully examining whether it is not an invasive species and whether there are other restrictions or conditions for the holding and marketing of specimens of that species.

Invasive species can be consulted and reported by the Invasive Species Manager, the <http://bit.ly/invazivs> website created this year in the LIFE Integrated Project, LatViaNature, implemented by the Nature Conservation Authority.

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1 Applies to the species of the Regulation, which includes 66 invasive species. [REGULATION \(EU\) NO .1143/2014](#) of 22 October 2014 on prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species. [EU list of invasive species & gt; & gt;](#)

[2 Development and Preparation of the 2015 and 2016 monitoring programme for invasive alien species. . Criteria for the selection of \[invasive species developed by Latvian scientists and the monitoring methodology for\]\(#\) , as well as the list of invasive alien species \(Annex 7\).](#)



*The goal of the LIFE Integrated Multiannual Project LatViaNature is to improve the natural protection system in Latvia. During the*

project, it is planned to develop innovative and appropriate approaches to address topical nature protection issues and to introduce a Natura 2000 priority action programme, thereby ensuring a favourable conservation status for habitats and species of European Union importance in Latvia. The project is scheduled to be implemented by 2028.

The project partnership consists of 10 organisations: managing partner Nature Protection Board in cooperation with partners - Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, University of Latvia, Daugavpils University, Latvian Agricultural University and Vidzeme University, as well as Latvian Rural Consulting and Education Centre, AS "Latvian State Forestry", Latvian Natural Fund and World Nature Foundation. the Natural Fund.

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The information reflects only the vision of the implementation of the LIFE IP LatViaNature project, and the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency is not responsible for the possible use of the information provided here.

<https://www.daba.gov.lv/en/article/animals-invasive-species-represent-threat-natural-diversity>