

Where do Goldfish come from?

Goldfish are common aquarium pets that originally descended from East Asian carp. When Goldfish are released in bodies of water in North America (ponds, rivers, streams, etc.), they cause major environmental problems as an invasive species. Goldfish do not belong in the natural environment in London.

Important Facts About Goldfish

- In ponds and in the wild, Goldfish can grow to be 12 to 14 inches (30 to 35 cm) and can weigh several pounds.
- If kept in containers in captivity, Goldfish likely remain smaller because they release a growth-inhibiting hormone into the water. In larger aquariums and bodies of water where the water is cycled often, the hormone is diluted and the fish will continue to grow.
- Goldfish live for 30-40 years if kept healthy.
- Aquariums lacking a pump or filter to circulate water will have low oxygen, causing fish to suffocate.
- Goldfish are messy – their container requires filtration and water changes.
- Keeping Goldfish inside a glass bowl is not recommended because of the small size and lack of oxygen circulation and filtration.

Frequently Asked Questions

I have a pet Goldfish and don't want it anymore, or can't take care of it. What should I do with my fish?

- Pet fish, dead or alive, should never be released outside or flushed down the drain under any circumstances. Dead fish can still transmit diseases and parasites to wild fish through water.
- You can rehome live fish by posting an ad online, such as using social media or a classified ad, and someone may take it from you. Some pet and aquarium stores in London may take your fish and resell them, but make sure to call the store in advance to ask if they offer this service.
- Consider offering your fish to a local school.
- If there are no viable alternatives, the most practical option may be to euthanize the fish. Humane methods to euthanize a Goldfish quickly, painlessly and without stress include using clove oil, a natural anesthetic (10 drops per liter of water) to overdose the fish, or using Alka Seltzer (2 tablets per liter of water) to remove oxygen from the water, rendering fish unconscious before they stop breathing.

Where can I learn more?

www.invasivespeciescentre.ca/goldfish

www.thamesriver.on.ca

—DRAFT— Important information for pet Goldfish owners

What you need to know about pet Goldfish and the environment



Prepared by the City of London
Environmental and Ecological Planning
Advisory Committee

What are Invasive Species?

Examples of invasive species introduced by humans to North America:

<Insert photos of

- English ivy
- Norway maple
- Emerald ash borer beetle
- *Lymantria dispar*>

An invasive species is an introduced organism that becomes overpopulated and harms its new environment.

In Canada, hundreds of non-native species of plants, animals and fungi have already been established by humans. A subset of these species are considered invasive because of their ability to spread. Introduced invasive species are bad for the environment because:

- They compete with native plants and animals that evolved here, including species at risk of extinction;
- They introduce disease and pests that native species are sensitive to;
- They can drastically alter and deplete landscapes and ecosystems;
- They multiply quickly and can be expensive and difficult to manage
- Common ways that invasive species spread in the environment include:
 - Dumping yard waste, plant cuttings, other organic waste in natural areas;
 - Dumping or flushing exotic pets like Goldfish, snails or aquarium plants;
 - Gardening with invasive plant species next to natural areas;

Goldfish infestations are a growing problem in London



Goldfish infestations currently occur in London at Westminster Ponds and The Coves. Pet Goldfish that are dumped or flushed can harm native species in several ways:

- Growing and multiplying quickly;
- Eating other fish eggs, younglings;
- Eating vegetation and other animals that native species would feed on;
- Stirring up mud, causing cloudy water that disturbs native fish.

The City of London and UTRCA actively remove invasive Goldfish from ecosystems

What happens to pet Goldfish that are released outside?

- Some predators may hunt Goldfish.
- Fish may be killed by freezing, pollution or removed by conservation management



Before you buy a new pet, consider alternatives to Goldfish



15" Goldfish recovered from Lake Ontario.

Other types of fish and aquarium animals can be easier than Goldfish to keep as pets

Other tropical fish like guppies, danios

<insert photo>

- Live 1-5 years
- Remain small in size
- Thrive in various water conditions
- Social (best kept in groups)

Betta fish <insert photo>

- Live 2-5 years
- Remain small in size, low-mess
- Solitary (best kept alone)

Aquatic African dwarf frogs <insert photo>

- Up to 5 years
- Remain small
- Breathe air from water's surface
- Social (best kept in groups)