



Red-Eared Sliders

What is HSPPR's policy on red-eared sliders?

Effective May 1, 2026, it is illegal to breed, sell, or release into the wild, red-eared sliders in the state of Colorado. In accordance with these state regulations, HSPPR will not adopt, rehome, or relocate red-eared sliders. Impounded (stray) red-eared sliders will be housed for a five-day holding period, and unclaimed or surrendered red-eared sliders will be humanely euthanized.

I have a pet red-eared slider at home – is that legal?

Yes, if you already have a red-eared slider at home, it is legal to continue having that animal as a pet. However, these animals may not be bred or rehomed.

If my red-eared slider is brought to the shelter, can I reclaim it?

Yes, you can reclaim your pet red-eared slider, as long as you are in compliance with jurisdictional and state requirements.

Why did Colorado change the regulations for red-eared sliders?

After a review of existing herpetofauna (reptile and amphibian) regulations, the state of Colorado determined that revisions to existing policies were needed to better protect native species. One of these revisions classified red-eared sliders as invasive.

Red-eared sliders have been sold through the pet trade in Colorado for many years. However, because it is costly and time-intensive to care for them properly in a home, they are often released into the wild. If red-eared sliders are released, they can readily establish breeding populations, where they compete with native turtles. They can also introduce pathogens and parasites that threaten native species and destabilize ecosystems. Because red-eared sliders are long-lived and prolific, once they become established in the wild, they are nearly impossible to eradicate. This new classification of red-eared sliders as an invasive species prohibits their release into the wild, thereby protecting native turtles from these detrimental ecosystem impacts.



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