pet trade.

caught or in transit.

are unable to accept them.

www.philadelphiazoo.org.

every year.

PHILADELPHIA

3400 West Girard Avenue • Philadelphia, PA 19104-1196 philadelphiazoo.org

extra care is often required. Previous experience a plus A good pet for most people Proceed with Caution **Good Choice**

Use This Card To Make Wise Pet Choices

and conservation status for the animals including diet, housing, special Color categories reflect considerations

Many pet trade species face conservation issues that are threatening **Curb Your Pet Choices**

Visit philadelphiazoo.org for more have are legal to own and captive-bred or by not keeping wild animals as pets

Conserve Wildlife

You can help stop the illegal pet trade

Parrots are the world's most endangered group

The enormous global demand for exotic pets is fueling the illegal capture and trade of millions of birds, mammals and reptiles annually, most of which die in the process of being

Green iguanas can grow to over six feet long while Burmese pythons can reach 20 feet in length — six to eight times their size as babies. Finding new homes for large, hard-to-handle animals can

be difficult, if not impossible, particularly since most zoos

Hundreds of wild "pets" attack their owners

Animals like tigers, venomous snakes and monkeys don't make good pets. They're unpredictable, can be aggressive and have been known to carry diseases that are transferable to humans. Private ownership is also illegal in many states. The "Best Bets for Pets" wallet card is designed to help you

make educated pet choices that are in the best interest of

you and your pet. For more information on the wallet card animals, please visit the Philadelphia Zoo's website at

of birds due to devastation from the international

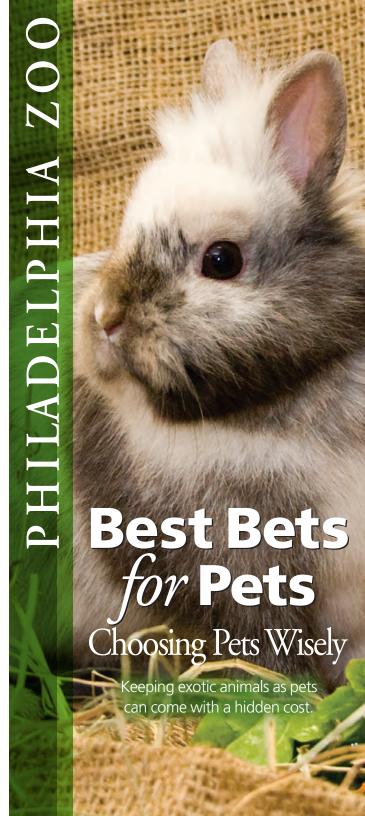
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Good pet choices begin with you! The following considerations can help you find the right pet. Remember, pets should never be an impulse buy, and will be a part of your household for years to

Time

Some animals can be surprisingly time-consuming! Do your research and make sure that the time you need to spend with your future pet (feeding, daily cleaning, interacting with and training) matches your lifestyle.

Money

Consider the costs! Pets need vet care, special housing, beds or hide boxes, perches and toys to keep them happy and healthy. Food costs can add up quickly too, especially for animals requiring special diets.

Space

The more space is better! Use multiple sources to determine a housing size requirement. And remember, an animal's temperament also influences the amount of space it needs. It's a myth that an animal only grows to be as big as the size of the enclosure — this is not true for reptiles, amphibians, birds or mammals.

Personality

Make sure that your choice of a companion animal fits your personality. If you like peace and quiet, avoid birds — they're noisy. If you like a tidy house, steer clear of livestock and parrots — they're messy. Many animals, like ferrets and aquatic turtles, have strong odors. Cuddling does not go over well with many animals such as reptiles and amphibians. Your best bets for cuddlers are dogs, cats, guinea pigs, domestic mice, domestic rats and cockatoos (these birds need extra cuddle time).

Legal Issues

The best method to research the legality of owning a future pet is to contact a representative from your state or local legislative office. Did you know that owning ferrets is illegal in California, owning hedgehogs and sugar gliders is illegal in Pennsylvania, and owning certain reptiles is illegal in Delaware?

Conservation Concerns

Birds, reptiles and marine life are among the species most frequently taken from the wild to supply the illegal pet trade. Ensure that your future pet has been bred in captivity and not taken from the wild . Additionally, because many exotic pets are released by owners when they become too difficult to handle, these animals can have a devastating effect on local ecosystems. For example, unwanted pet Burmese pythons introduced into the Florida Everglades are now breeding in the wild, competing for food and displacing native wildlife.

Further Reading

Look for the *Best Bets for Pets* pages in the conservation section of the Philadelphia Zoo's website. There, you will find more information on each species listed on the Best Bets for *Pets* wallet card and links to other online resources.



(Burmese, reticulated) Poison dart frog Pythons, large ortoise, large Highly Specialized owl (duck, turkey, arrots (African gr eclectus, macaw, Amazon, cockatı horse, pig, pon Fish and coral (captive born saltwater) Monitor lizard guana (green) Mantella frog (savannah)

birds, snakes, frog toads, lizards, etc.

Always Avoid

arantula (Chilea

Eastern box turtle

Diamondback

Crocodile Caiman

Fish and coral (wild caught)

Fortoise (Russian,

(small and large)

Exotic cats

Hermit Crab

Kinkajou

and lizards

Monitor lizard, large

#Illegal in Pennsylvania Skink (blue-tongued, Tree frogs (White's, Rabbit (domestic) Tarantula (Red k (Egyptian, Herr Fortoise, small Proceed with Caution African hedgehog# Kingsnake Parakeet (budgie) Iamster (Syrian Bearded dragon Dog* (domestic, Perret (domestic Betta (Siamese fighting fish)
Chinchilla Fish (tropical Horned frog Cockatiel Degut Hissing cockroad Wilk snake (Pueb, Mouse (domestic, Hamster (dwarf,

Cat (domestic) Chicken (check zoning)

Sall python

Corn snake (rat

Dog* (domestic, Dove/Pigeon

(domestic)

Finch

caiques, conure, lovebird, Senegal, etc.,

Fire-bellied toad Goldfish