

Media Release:

02.05.08

Reminder that Ferrets are Prohibited in the Territory

The recent confiscation of a ferret in Alice Springs has prompted the Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service to remind Territorians they are prohibited from possessing these exotic mammals in the Northern Territory.

Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service Wildlife Officer Jon DeLaine said ferrets are a restricted entrant under the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act* because they pose a considerable threat to native wildlife if released into the wild.

“This threat may be a result of predation and competition with native animals, or because they may spread diseases and parasites,” Mr DeLaine said.

“Ferrets are one of a number of restricted species that include Axolotls (Mexican walking fish) and Red-eared Slider Turtles which are all defined as ‘*Restricted Animals*’, and have been excluded from entering the Territory in order to minimise the potential spread or establishment of new pest species.

“Under Section 67b of the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act* a person could be fined \$11,000 or imprisoned for up to 12 months if they are found guilty of importing, exporting or being in possession or in control of a prohibited entrant such as a ferret.”

Mr DeLaine said ferrets are related to otters and skunks and are slightly smaller than a domestic cat and come in a range of colour forms including white, brown and grey.

“They are carnivorous and may impact severely on native bird, mammal and reptile populations if released in the Northern Territory,” Mr DeLaine said.

“The potential for the introduction and or transmission of diseases is also of serious concern.

“The Northern Territory isn’t the only place in Australia to ban these exotic carnivores, it is also illegal to keep ferrets in Queensland.

“In addition to this most recent confiscation in Alice Springs, the Parks and Wildlife Service in Darwin have confiscated two ferrets so far this year.

“I urge people who have any information about restricted animals to contact their local Parks and Wildlife Service.”

For more information on restricted species in the Northern Territory go to:
www.nt.gov.au/nreta/wildlife/permits/restricted

Ends

Media Note – for more information contact Jon DeLaine on 8951 8283

Issued: 8.45am Friday, 2 May 2008