

## Ferrets in California



It's not like Department of Fish and Game (DF&G) is hanging out at Pet Stores looking for people buying ferret supplies, and then jotting down your license number to track you to your home. Most of the time it's people getting turned in by a new landlord, a vindictive ex, a mean neighbor or someone just being completely ignorant about the laws in California. There have also been a few cases of being in the wrong place at the wrong time and the ferret ends up seized.

Yes, it is a risky proposition having your ferret in California. You do live with that little cloud of fear hanging over your head that sometimes makes you think "Will today be the day that I'm found out?" But if you keep your head down and use common sense the chances of getting caught with your illegal ferret(s) is a slim one.

As to why ferrets are illegal in California: there is no scientific reason for it. In 1933 ferrets were mistakenly put on the prohibited wildlife list when DF&G was formed. Other states made this mistake and over time, have rectified it by removing the Domestic Ferret from the wildlife list. Why not California? It pretty much boils down to the fact that they don't want to admit they are wrong and they get a lot of money by being wrong. Sierra Club, Audubon and other organizations, for whatever reason, keep pumping money to California DF&G for keeping ferrets illegal. Never mind the fact that they never spoke up in other states where ferrets were illegal (Massachusetts comes to mind).

To keep ferrets illegal, DF&G has come up with a number of reasons over the years. No rabies vaccine, a lie which was answered by a lawsuit by the makers of Imrab, no distemper vaccine, which has since been taken off their list of excuses, violent towards children, which is backed by California Health Services, (wonder where New York city got their ideas), and of course the "fact" that ferrets can go feral. So what if DF&G can't find a real source to back up these "facts"? They make one up of course! Easy to do when you are getting all sorts of money to keep ferrets illegal. So why doesn't anyone see through these tactics? Well, unless you have taken the time to actually verify DF&G claims, you wouldn't necessarily know since technically they are supposed to be telling the truth. Granted it doesn't take too long using the internet to verify some of their "claims" but for some people (those overseeing DF&G) this is still too long.

