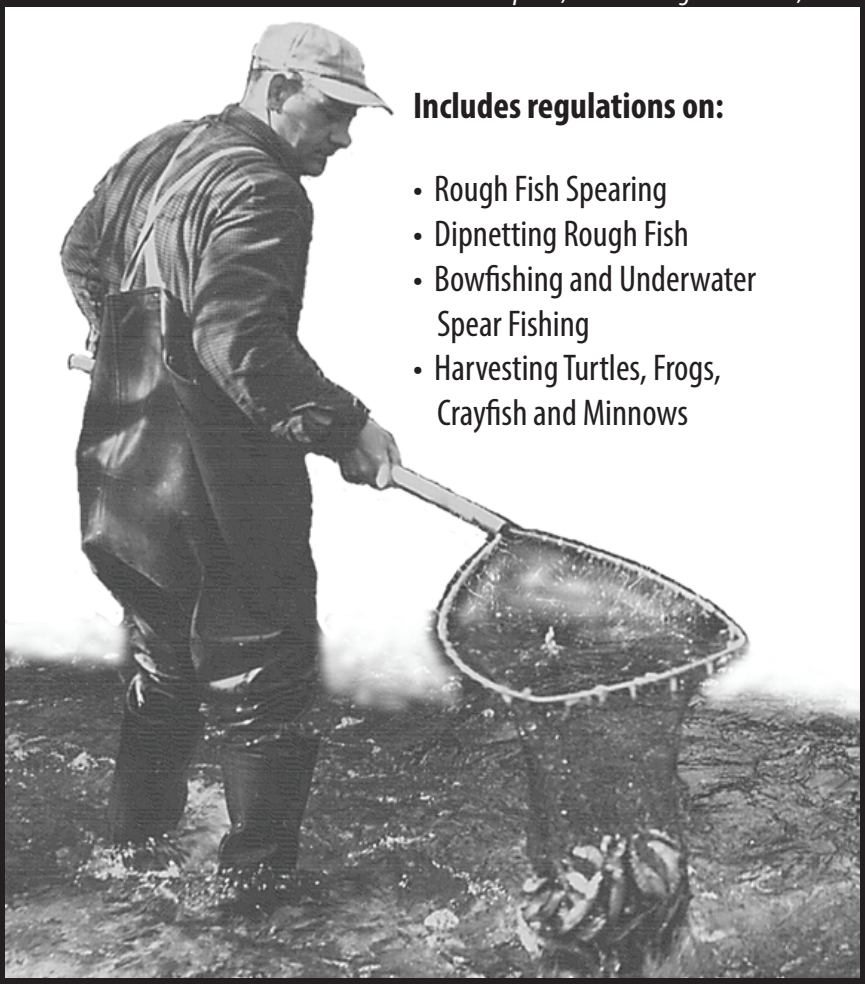
Guide to Wisconsin

Spearing, Netting, and Bait Harvest Regulations 2013-2014

Effective April 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014



Includes regulations on:

- Rough Fish Spearing
- Dipnetting Rough Fish
- Bowfishing and Underwater Spear Fishing
- Harvesting Turtles, Frogs, Crayfish and Minnows

WISCONSIN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Bureau of Fisheries Management
P.O. Box 7921
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Guide to Wisconsin Spearing, Netting, and Bait Harvest Regulations 2013-2014

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Note: Sturgeon spearing regulations are found in the *Winnebago System Sturgeon Spearing Regulations & Information* pamphlet.

This document is an interpretive summary of Wisconsin's spearing and netting regulations. For complete laws, consult Wisconsin State Statutes Chapter 29 and the Administrative Code of the DNR .

Report Hunting and Fishing Violations
Call 1-800-TIP-WDNR (847-9367)
Toll Free • Statewide • 24-Hour • Confidential
(General Information NOT provided from this number)

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Hook and line, spearing, bow fishing (bow and arrow, crossbow), minnow trapping or taking fish by hand requires a fishing license, unless the person is a resident and otherwise exempted from purchasing a license (i.e., under 16 years old or residents born before 1/1/27). (Note: Nonresidents under the age of 16 do not need a license to fish with hook and line, but do need a license to spear, net, trap, or take fish by hand. Nonresidents under the age of 18 who have a parent that is a Wisconsin resident may obtain a fishing license at the resident fee).

Netting. No fishing license is required for residents taking minnows, smelt or rough fish with a dip net or minnow seine. All nonresidents, regardless of age, are required to have a Wisconsin nonresident fishing license for harvesting smelt or taking rough fish or minnows with dip nets, seines, or minnow traps.

Turtles. A fishing, small game, sports, patron or resident setline, set/bank pole or commercial Mississippi River license is required for taking turtles, except for residents who are exempt from purchasing a license. Nonresidents of any age need to have a license, unless under age 16 and only taking turtles by hook and line.

Crayfish and Frogs. A fishing, small game, sports, or patron license is required to take crayfish, except for residents who are exempt from purchasing a license. Sales of crayfish or frogs for fish bait requires a bait dealers license. Nonresidents may not sell crayfish or frogs for fishing bait in Wisconsin. Frogs may be taken and possessed without a license.

Leeches and aquatic insects. No license is required except a DNR permit may be required for dredging depending on the method, location, and amount of bottom material disturbed. Search for "water management specialist" at dnr.wi.gov for additional information.

Minnow harvest and sales. A wild bait harvest permit is required to harvest minnows and transport them away from any water of the state live. A bait dealer license is required to sell minnows or to possess over 600 minnows unless the person is exempted as a resident under 16 years of age who can sell less than $500 annually and can have up to 5000 of each species. Because of the VHS fish virus, minnows may not be collected in VHS waters and minnows from other locations must be health certified before sale. Non-residents may not sell minnows for fishing bait. Check the DNR web site for further details about bait harvest and sales regulations.

Rough fish sales. Rough fish may only be sold to the final consumer unless the seller is licensed as a wholesale fish dealer or commercial fisherman. Netted suckers taken with dipnets or seines may not be sold. Non-residents may not sell smelt or minnows (including suckers).

What is a minnow or rough fish? By Wisconsin law, **minnows** include suckers, mud minnow, madtoms, stonecat, killifish, stickleback, trout perch, darters, sculpins, and all species in the minnow family (except goldfish and carp). **Rough fish** include suckers, common carp, Asian carp (bighead, black, silver and grass), goldfish, redhorse, freshwater drum, burbot, bowfin, gar, buffalo, lamprey, alewife, gizzard shad, smelt, mooneye, and carpsuckers.

YOU MAY NOT:

◆ transport water in boats, vehicles, trailers, containers, fishing equipment, or gear of any type when leaving any state waters, banks or shores, or entering Wisconsin over land for use on any water of this state. This does not apply to any drinking water or up to 2 gallons of water being used to hold minnows purchased from a Wisconsin bait dealer or registered fish farm, which can be legally transported.

◆ transport or operate any vehicle, boat, trailer, or object of any kind on any public roadway with any aquatic plants or animals attached. Immediately after leaving any waterbody and before leaving any landing or associated parking area, you must remove all attached aquatic plants or animals.

◆ transport any live fish or live fish eggs away from any state waters. There is an exception for minnows obtained from a Wisconsin bait dealer or registered fish farm. These minnows may be transported away live and used again:

- on the same water, or
- on any other waters if not exposed to any lake or river water, and no other fish were added to their container.

◆ use or possess any fish trap or trammel, cast, gill, or hoop net, or any other kind of fishing net that might take, catch or kill fish except areas where it is specifically authorized. Cast nets are illegal to possess or use on any state water, except for taking suckers on Wisconsin/Iowa boundary waters.

◆ possess or control any bow and arrow, spear, (or similar device) on or along any water that might be used to take, catch, or kill fish except where authorized during the specified open season for rough fish.

◆ use firearms, explosives, air guns, or poisons for disturbing or taking any fish.

◆ fish with nets, traps, seines, spears (including bow and arrow, crossbow) or by hand in refuges, other closed areas or trout streams (except it is legal to take rough fish by hand in a trout stream). Such gear or taking fish by hand is also not allowed within 200' of any dam, lock or fish way (except ≤500' outlying waters), or within 500' of posted DNR nets or weirs or except as expressly provided.

◆ fish with hook and line from a boat while in possession of a dip net.

◆ leave any dip net or seine unattended within 25' of the edge of the water.

◆ fish in any other manner **while operating** a dip net or seine .

◆ have in possession any threatened or endangered species without a permit from the department. These include but are not limited to: some species of fish, frogs, mussels, and turtles. See the DNR website, dnr.wi.gov, for more listed species information.

◆ cut, use, or maintain an ice hole larger than 12 inches in diameter or square for the taking of fish in any manner through the ice except taking fish with dip nets or skin or scuba diving, taking minnows with minnow traps, spearing on Lake Superior, or sturgeon spearing on Lake Winnebago system waters.

SPEARING RESTRICTIONS

Spearing is defined as fishing with a device consisting of a shaft with an attached sharp, barbed point or points and includes spears, bow and arrow, crossbow, spear guns, and other similar devices.

◆ No person shall have under his control any spear or similar device in any enclosure on the ice or waters of the Embarrass River in Shawano County from the Pella Dam downstream; the Wolf River from Shawano Dam downstream to the Fox River and on the ice of the Fox River from Johnson Creek in Green Lake County downstream through Lake Winnebago and all connecting lakes of both streams except when authorized during established sturgeon spearing season.

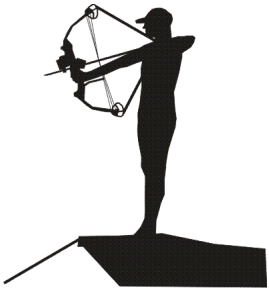
◆ Spearing ice hole restriction: No person may cut, use, or maintain an ice hole larger than 12 inches in diameter or square for the taking of fish in any manner through the ice except spearing on Lake Superior, skin or scuba diving, or sturgeon spearing on the Lake Winnebago system.

◆ There may be local public safety ordinances that prohibit the use of a bow and arrow or crossbow in some areas. Please check with your local law enforcement office for further information.

◆ Spearing by methods other than bow and arrow or crossbow is restricted to sunrise to sunset on all waters.

Spearing Bag Limits: There are no bag limits on rough fish, except the limit for suckers is 600.

FISHING WITH BOW AND ARROW or CROSSBOW



YOU MAY NOT:

◆ Take rough fish with a bow and arrow or crossbow unless the arrow is equipped with a metal barbed tip that is attached to the bow with a tethered line that allows for the retrieval of the arrow and the fish.

◆ Release or return any rough fish taken with a bow and arrow or crossbow, whether dead or alive, to any waters of the state.

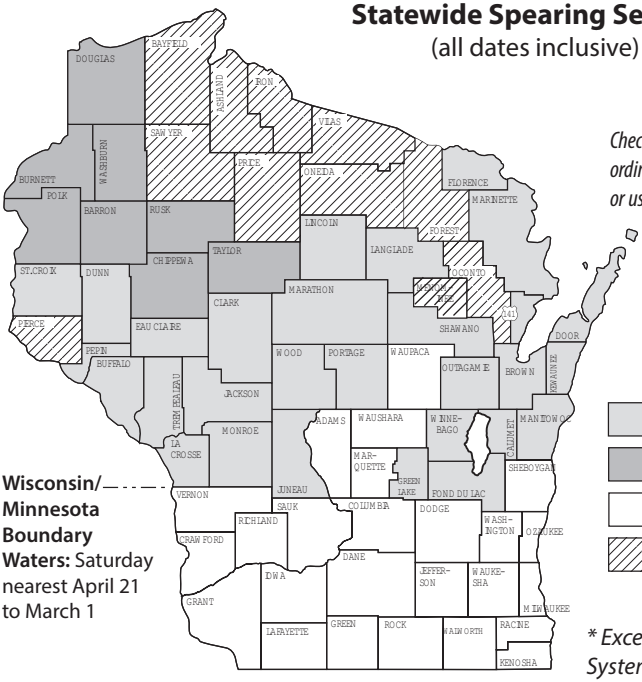
◆ Leave any rough fish taken with a bow and arrow or crossbow, whether dead or alive, on the ice or banks of any waters of the state.

◆ Violate local ordinances that prohibit the discharge of bow and arrow or crossbow within their area of jurisdiction. Check for local ordinances on the use of bow and arrow or crossbow within city, town, or village limits.

LEGAL HOURS: On all inland, outlying, and boundary waters with an open season for spearing rough fish, the taking of rough fish with a bow and arrow or crossbow on that body of water is allowed at any time of day, including from sunset to sunrise during that open season. Lights, including laser sights, are legal to use at night for spearing rough fish with a bow and arrow or crossbow.

Underwater Spear Fishing:
It is lawful to take the following fish species with the use of spears and spear guns by skin and scuba diving in all waters where spearing for rough fish is permitted from sunrise to sunset during the listed spearing seasons: white bass, yellow bass (striped), rock bass, crappie, bluegill, perch, pumpkinseed (sunfish) and bullheads provided that the season for these species is also open on the same water. Daily bag limits and length restrictions also apply.

Statewide Spearing Seasons
(all dates inclusive)



Check with local authorities for ordinances affecting possession or use of bows and spears.

- April 21 to First Sunday in March
- Saturday nearest May 20 to November 1
- Continuous season*
- Spearing prohibited**

Wisconsin/Minnesota Boundary Waters: Saturday nearest April 21 to March 1

Wisconsin/Iowa Boundary Waters: Continuous season

** Except several Winnebago System waters, which close February 1*

*** See "Waters closed to spearing" on Page 8 for exceptions.*

ROUGH FISH SPEARING SEASON
(Refer to map above)

It is lawful during specified open seasons for any person to take rough fish by means of spears, bow and arrow or crossbow, and spear guns and spears while skin and scuba diving, unless otherwise specified, in the inland waters or from the shores of inland waters excluding trout streams as follows:

Continuous Season: There is a continuous open season in the counties or listed waters of Adams, Columbia, Crawford, Dane, Dodge, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Kenosha, Lafayette, Marquette, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Richland, Rock, Sauk (except that

no spearing is permitted in Devil's Lake), Sheboygan, Vernon, Walworth, Washington, Waukesha, Waupaca* (includes the Embarrass River, Wolf River, and Waupaca River downstream from Weyauwega Dam) and Waushara* (except as otherwise listed).

Saturday Nearest March 15 to but not including the Saturday Nearest May 1: Suckers and carp may be speared sunrise to sunset only, in the following trout waters in Waushara County: Willow Creek between the point where the two branches unite in Sec. 12, T18N, R11E, Town of Marion and the dam in Auroraville; Pine River between the point where the said stream crosses the highway in Sec.3, T19N, R12E, Town of Leon to the dam in Poy Sippi and the White River below the junction of the main and west branches in SE 1/4, NE 1/4, Sec. 10, T18N, R10E, Town of Dakota, downstream to the White River flowage in Sec. 13 of Dakota township. The possession or use of a spear or similar device is prohibited at all times on all other streams containing trout.

**April 21 to February 1:* Lakes Winnebago, Poygan, Winneconne, Buttes des Morts, Cincoe, Partridge and Partridge Crop in Calumet, Fond du Lac, Waushara, Waupaca, and Winnebago counties, and the Fox and Wolf rivers in Winnebago County.

April 21 to the First Sunday in March: In the counties of Brown, Buffalo, Calumet, (except Lake Winnebago*), Clark, Door, Dunn, Eau Claire, Florence, Fond du Lac, (except Lake Winnebago*), Green Lake, Jackson, Juneau, Kewaunee, La Crosse, Langlade, Lincoln, Manitowoc, Marathon, (except that spearing is prohibited in the Big Eau Pleine Flowage from the dam upstream to Highway 97 from November 1 to April 20), Marinette, Monroe, Oconto (in that portion of the county east of Highway 141 only), Outagamie, Pepin, Portage, St. Croix, Shawano, Trempealeau, Winnebago (lakes Winnebago, Poygan, Winneconne, Buttes des Morts, and the Fox and Wolf rivers*), and Wood.

Saturday Nearest May 20 to November 1: In Burnett, Chippewa, Douglas, Rusk, Taylor, Washburn, Polk and Barron Counties inland waters. Burbot, but no other species, may also be speared sunset to sunrise in the Amnicon and Nemadji Rivers and the Black River upstream to the Soo Line Bridge from December 15 to January 31 in Douglas County and the Bad River, Ashland County.

Waters Closed to Spearing: No person shall have in his possession or under his control on any of the inland waters or shores of inland waters at any time any spear or simi-

lar device that might be used for the purpose of taking, catching or killing fish in the counties of Ashland (except in the Bad River where burbot but no other species may be taken by means of spears from sunset to sunrise December 15 to January 31 inclusive), Bayfield, Iron, Menominee, Oconto (in that portion of the county west of Highway 141 only), Oneida, Pierce, Price, Sawyer, Forest and Vilas counties and the Menominee River in Florence and Marinette counties.

Except: *Saturday nearest May 20 to July 1:* Rough fish may be taken with bow and arrow only in Iron and Sawyer Counties and in Fish Creek Slough (Bayfield Co.) from its mouth to the junction of North and South Fish Creeks.

SPEARING AND NETTING IN BOUNDARY AND OUTLYING WATERS

Wisconsin/Minnesota and Wisconsin/Iowa boundary waters: It is unlawful for any person to use a spear, bow and arrow, crossbow or similar device in any manner at any time for the purpose of taking, catching or killing any gamefish of any variety, or to have in possession or under control any fish spear or spring gaff in a fish house (shanty).

Wisconsin/Minnesota boundary waters: Rough fish spearing season: Saturday nearest April 21 to March 1; Rough fish may be taken by means of spears, bow and arrow, or crossbow sunrise to sunset only except for bow and arrow and crossbow, which may also be used on the Wisconsin side of the river from sunset to sunrise.

Wisconsin/Iowa boundary waters: Rough fish spearing season: Continuous open season. Rough fish may be taken by means of spears, bow and arrow, or crossbow sunrise to sunset only except for bow and arrow and crossbow, which may also be used from sunset to sunrise. Cast nets no larger than 7 feet in diameter or mesh of more than 1/2" stretch measure may be used to take suckers only.

Wisconsin/Michigan boundary waters: Spearing of rough fish is legal on the Menominee River from the Saturday nearest April 21 to March 1 in Marinette County and the Saturday nearest April 21 to the first Sunday in March in Florence County; Spearing of rough fish is also legal on Big Bad Water Lake and the Brule River below Hwy 2 from the Saturday nearest April 21 to the first Sunday in March in Florence County. The rough fish spearing season is open to anyone with the appropriate states fishing license on the Wisconsin side of these waters only. Check with Michigan for restrictions on spearing

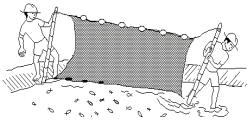
rough fish on the Michigan side of the river. Rough fish may be taken by means of spears sunrise to sunset only. Bow and arrow and crossbow may be used at any time of the day. Check for local ordinances on the use of bow and arrow or crossbow within city, town, or village limits. Check with the state of Michigan for spearing rules on the Michigan side of these boundary waters.

Outlying Waters — (Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, Green Bay, Sturgeon Bay, Sawyer's Harbor and the Fox River from its mouth up to the dam at De Pere): It is unlawful to spear any species or variety of fish in the outlying waters at any time, except that rough fish may be speared from sunrise to sunset in all outlying waters. Northern pike may be speared through the ice in Lake Superior. Taking rough fish by bow and arrow or crossbow is also allowed from sunset to sunrise on outlying waters.

NETTING

A **Dip Net** is a net suspended from a round or square frame but up to 8 ft. in diameter or square and designed to be raised and lowered vertically to take rough fish or minnows.

A **Landing Net** is a net suspended on a frame with an attached handle that is used to help an angler in landing a fish caught with hook and line. Landing nets may also be used to take rough fish where authorized to use dip nets to take rough fish.



A **Seine** is a net made of circular, square, or long webbing of course twine fitted with floats on the top and sinkers on the bottom. The net forms a bag near the center that entraps fish as it is pulled through the water. Seines may be used to take minnows, whitefish and cisco, and smelt on some waters.

RESTRICTIONS

IT IS ILLEGAL:

◆ To take any fish, other than smelt, from Lake Superior, its bays and tributaries, the St. Louis River, and the Montreal River downstream from the Superior Falls dam with traps and nets.

◆ To have in possession at any time any kind of net or nets or fish trap except landing net, minnow seines and traps, whitefish and cisco seines, dip nets (may only be set or used from sunrise to sunset), crayfish traps and turtle traps in the following counties: Adams, Barron, Burnett, Calumet, Chippewa, Clark, Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Dunn, Eau Claire, Florence, Fond du Lac, Forest, Green, Green Lake, Iowa, Jackson, Jefferson, Juneau, Lafayette, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Marquette, Monroe, Oneida, Outagamie, Polk, Portage, Price, Richland, Rock, Rusk, Sauk, Sawyer, Shawano, Taylor, Vilas, Walworth, Washburn, Washington, Waukesha, Waupaca, Waushara, Winnebago, and Wood or to have in possession or under control any basket traps (slat nets), trammel nets, or wooden traps in Buffalo, Burnett, La Crosse, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, St. Croix, Trempealeau and Vernon (Minnesota boundary waters).

◆ to take rough fish by any method from September 15 through December 31 in Lake Michigan tributaries, major Green Bay tributaries, and all other tributary streams and ditches to Green Bay upstream to the first dam or lake from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise.

DIP NETS FOR ROUGH FISH

There is no bag or possession for rough fish taken by dipnetting except the limit for suckers is 600. No suckers taken with dip nets or seines may be sold or bartered in any manner.

No person, while operating a dip net for rough fish, shall fish for fish in any other manner at that time and no person shall fish with hook and line from any boat while in possession of a dip net, whether in use or not. Only one dip net per person is permitted to take smelt and minnows. Such dip nets must be attended at all times while in use and such nets shall only be raised and lowered vertically when fishing.

Frame Dip Nets: Frame dip nets for rough fish shall not exceed 8 feet in diameter or 8 feet square unless otherwise specified. One frame dip net per person may be used all year to take rough fish at any time in Marinette and Oconto counties in all streams flowing into Green Bay from a point 200 feet upstream from the mouth and extending 15 miles inland in a straight line, except in the Menominee River where dip nets for rough fish and smelt may be used at any time from April 1 to May 14. It shall be unlawful to use any dip net in that part of the Menominee River beginning at the upstream side

of the Hattie Street Bridge in Marinette and extending upstream to the first dam and within 200 feet below all other dams. Frame dip nets used in Menominee River shall not exceed 9 feet square or 9 feet in diameter, making a bag when lifted not more than 4 feet deep.

One frame dip net per person may be used all year to take rough fish in all the non-designated trout streams and rivers, excluding lakes, flowing into Lake Michigan and Green Bay in the counties of Brown, Door, Kenosha, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine and Sheboygan in that part of each such stream or river beginning at the mouth and extending upstream to a point 500 feet below the first dam located on such stream or river.

One frame dip net per person may be used sunrise to sunset, from May 1 to March 15, to take rough fish except suckers, in that part of the Fond du Lac River in Fond du Lac County beginning at its mouth and extending upstream 3 miles.

One frame dip net per person may be used from April 25 to May 31 for the removal of rough fish from that part of Lake Winnebago within a distance of 500 feet from the shoreline of Calumet County.

The use of dip nets not more than 2 feet in diameter or 2 feet square to take rough fish in the St. Croix River downstream to the St. Croix Falls Dam, Polk County is permitted from the Saturday nearest May 15 to June 30.

Except in Lake Superior, its bays and tributaries, one dip net not exceeding 8 feet in diameter or 8 feet square may be used in all other inland and outlying waters except designated trout streams at any time of the year, sunrise to sunset, to take rough fish with no bag or possession limit, except the limit for suckers is 600.

NETS FOR SMELT

Smelt taken by nonresidents can not be sold, traded, or bartered in any manner. Smelt may be taken by same methods and in accordance with seasons and location restrictions for taking other rough fish (see page 10). In addition, smelt may be taken with dip nets and seines as follows:

Frame dip nets not exceeding 8 feet in diameter or 8 feet square may be used all year without hour restrictions for taking smelt in Lake Michigan and all the streams flowing into Lake Michigan and Green Bay beginning at the lake or bay and extending upstream to 500 feet below the first dam. They may be used 5 miles inland from the mouth on streams which have no dam except the Fox River in Brown County from 500 feet below the dam at De Pere.

Seines not more than 75 feet in length and not more than 6 feet in depth may be used at any time during the day or night for taking smelt from April 1 to May 25 in Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, Green Bay and most outlying waters except that portion of the Fox River in Brown County from the dam in the city of DePere downstream 1,500 feet. Seines of this dimension may be used for taking smelt in St. Louis Bay, Superior Bay, Allouez Bay and from the mouth of the St. Louis River upstream to the north 28th St. landing in Douglas County. Seines of this dimension may also be used at any time all year for taking smelt in Beaver Dam Lake, Barron County.

Frame dip nets not exceeding 8 feet in diameter or 8 feet square may be used without hour restrictions from April 1 to May 25 for taking smelt in Lake Superior and all streams flowing into Lake Superior in Ashland, Bayfield, and Iron counties and the Brule River in Douglas County, from the mouth of each stream, inland for one-half mile in a straight line. Zoning does not apply on Bear Creek, Bluff Creek, the Nemadji River, the St. Louis River, and Amnicon River and the other nontrout streams in Douglas County, and in the waters of the Chippewa, Bad River (upstream to Copper Falls) and White Rivers in Ashland County not designated as trout stream or on streams where active sea lamprey control structures are located.

Dip nets not exceeding 8 feet in diameter or 8 feet square may be used without hour restrictions to take smelt in Lake Lucerne, Forest County; the Flambeau lake chain, Vilas County, including thoroughfares and tributary streams 200 feet upstream and downstream from the lake basins. The open and closed seasons shall be at the directive of the Regional Director.

Nets for Whitefish and Cisco

Frame dip nets not more than 8 feet in diameter or 8 feet square may be used at any time of day by state residents to take whitefish and cisco in inland waters (except Lake Lucerne in Forest County) from the Saturday nearest October 10 to February 1. The possession limit of whitefish or cisco so taken is 25 pounds and 1 fish in aggregate. Trout Lake in Vilas County: There is a bag limit of 10 fish in total.

Dip nets and seines may be used at any time of the day to take whitefish and cisco from Keyes Lake in Florence County from the Saturday nearest October 10 to January 15 with a daily bag limit of 3 fish.

Seines not to exceed 75 feet in length and a depth not greater than 6 feet and with a mesh not to exceed 2 inches stretch measure may be used at any time of the day by state residents to take whitefish and cisco in inland waters (except Lake Lucerne in Forest County) from the Saturday nearest October 10 to February 1. The possession limit of whitefish or cisco is 25 pounds and 1 fish in aggregate. Palette Lake in Vilas County: Permit required. Trout Lake in Vilas County: There is a bag limit of 10 fish in total.

Nets and Traps for Minnows

It is illegal to take live, wild-harvested minnows (including suckers) away from a waterbody unless authorized under a wild bait harvest permit.

It is illegal for anyone to possess more than 600 minnows (including suckers) except licensed bait dealers and residents younger than 16 years old and doing business as a bait dealer. Residents more than 16 years old must have a bait dealer's license to sell minnows, crayfish, or frogs for bait. Residents under 16 years old and doing business as a bait dealer can possess no more than 5,000 of each species and can sell less than $500 worth annually without a bait dealer's license. It is illegal for nonresidents to sell minnows, crayfish, or frogs as bait.

Location Restrictions
NO minnow species may be netted or trapped in Lake Superior, Lake Michigan and Green Bay, the Winnebago System (including Wolf and Fox River systems), Mississippi River and

Wisconsin River up to the Prairie du Sac Dam, including all waters connected to these waters upstream to the first barrier impassable to fish (see the VHS pages on the DNR website - dnr.wi.gov - for an up-to-date list of VHS waters). (Exception: Up to 600 suckers may be harvested from these waters but may not leave the water alive). You may not set, use or operate any net, trap or similar device for the taking of minnows on the waters listed above, with the exception of suckers as noted above.

Other Restrictions
Unless you have a permit from the DNR, you may not use minnow seines or minnow dip nets of any type or description in inland trout streams or tributary spring ponds. During the open trout season, people who do not possess a bait dealer's license can't use more than three minnow traps to collect or harvest minnows from trout streams.

Bait minnows may be harvested, where allowed, by the following methods only:
- Hook and line.
- With seines no more than 35 feet long with a mesh no larger than one-half inch stretch measure in inland waters. Fifty-foot lengths of seine may be used in Minnesota and Iowa boundary waters.
- With dip nets no more than eight feet in diameter or square.
- With traps no more than 24 inches long and 16 inches in diameter or square with a throat measuring one-and-a-half inches or less. All traps must bear their owner's name and address and be emptied at least once every 48 hours. Minnows traps on trout streams must be checked and emptied at least once every 24 hours.

Minnows and Individual Angler Harvest
Personal harvest of minnows is limited to harvest of minnows where harvest is not restricted (see page 14) and only for use as bait on the water where they were harvested. These minnows can never be transported away from the bank or shore of the water alive. They may be kept in a live box or other container on that water for future use. Wild bait harvest permits are not available to persons other than bait dealers. Anglers are allowed to use up to 3 minnow traps in trout streams during the open trout season.

Minnows and Bait Dealer Harvest
A wild bait harvest permit is required for all licensed bait dealers to harvest wild minnows. These permits include a number of conditions that must be met including gear disinfection

and fish health inspections. Full details concerning wild bait harvest can be found on the DNR's website (dnr.wi.gov).

Bait dealers are allowed no more than 20 minnow traps on trout streams during the open trout season, unless they possess a non-standard gear permit issued by the department.

Frogs

Season: The open season for taking frogs is the Saturday nearest May 1 to December 31.

It is unlawful to take frogs by firearms or airguns.

Possession Limit: 5 of each species (not Threatened or Endangered - see list at dnr. wi.gov), except there is no limit on the number that can be possessed which are collected and possessed for up to 24 hours for fishing bait.

Frogs may be sold for fish bait only under a bait dealers license. It is illegal to sell frogs for purposes other than fishing bait (except northern leopard frogs may be sold as authorized under a Class A captive wild animal farm license).

Crayfish

Season: Wisconsin/Minnesota Boundary Waters - May 1 to the following March 1
Remainder of State - Continuous open season.

◆ No person may possess live crayfish and angling equipment simultaneously on any water except the Mississippi River, Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, Green Bay, Sturgeon Bay, Sawyer's Harbor, and the Fox River from its mouth up to De Pere Dam.

◆ Must possess a valid fishing license or small game license, except persons under the age of 16 do not need a license.

Crayfish traps placed in trout streams shall conform to the dimensions of minnow traps. See Nets and Traps for Minnows (page 14)

Crayfish scoops may be used in the Wisconsin/Minnesota boundary waters provided the scoops do not exceed 4 feet in length, 3 feet in width and 18 inches in depth attached to a handle not to exceed 4 feet in length.

Crayfish may be taken in all waters by the following means only: By hand, by use of minnow seines and minnow dip nets, where the same are permitted for the taking of minnows, and by crayfish traps (other than in trout streams) with the entrance to the trap not to exceed 2-1/2 inches at the greatest diagonal measurement. Crayfish traps used on trout streams must comply with minnow trap size restrictions (see page 15). Traps must bear the name and address of the owner and must be raised and emptied at least once each day following the day set.

Parts of fish and fish by-products including fish meal or prepared parts of such fish may not be used for bait unless: the fish were caught from the water being trapped, are minnows obtained from a bait dealer, or are used with written authorization from the WDNR. Other meats (e.g., chicken and beef livers) may be used for bait for crayfish.

Floats or markers used to locate traps 1) may not exceed 5 inches in size, 2) may not extend more than 4 inches above the water surface, 3) must clearly display the name and address (in the English language) of the owner or operator, and 4) must not be orange or any other fluorescent color.

Turtles

All residents and non-residents who collect, attempt to collect, or possess native Wisconsin turtles must possess a valid approval that authorizes the hunting of small game or fishing, unless otherwise exempted from the need for either of these types of licenses because of age. Some species are protected and may not be harvested. Residents under the age of 16 do not need a license but must comply with seasons, size and possession limits.

These regulations apply to native Wisconsin turtle species, regardless of their origin.

The open turtle season runs from July 15 through November 30.

Turtles or turtle eggs may not be taken during the closed season. Ornate Box, Wood, and Blanding's turtles may not be taken or possessed without an Endangered Species permit.

Persons may collect or possess up to 5 individuals of each species with the following exceptions:

◆ The possession limit for snapping turtles and softshell turtles is 3 each statewide. The one exception is the Mississippi River, where the possession limit is 10 for snapping turtles and 5 for softshell turtles. The possession limit is not more than 5 total for all other species combined.

Possession Limit for Turtles

Species	WI-IA/WI-MN Boundary Waters	Inland Waters
Snapping	10	3
Softshell	5	3
Others	5 in total	5 in total

◆ Licensed bait dealers and registered fish farmers may possess more than 5 specimens of any unprotected amphibian species which are collected or possessed as part of a bait collection or shipment.

◆ It is illegal to sell native amphibians and reptiles, except:

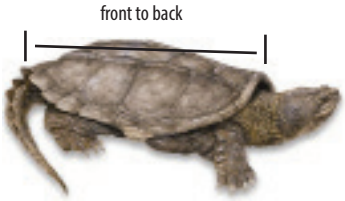
Eastern tiger salamanders, mudpuppies, and northern leopard frogs collected in state may be sold*.

Native amphibians and reptiles collected outside the state may be sold out of state, or to education and research institutions in state. *

Legally harvested dead turtles and their parts may be sold during the open season only. A license is not needed to sell dead turtle parts during the open season.

* A Class A Captive Wild Animal Farm License is required to sell under the above exceptions.

Snapping turtle size limits are a 12-inch minimum and a 16-inch maximum carapace (top shell) length. There are no size limits for other turtles.

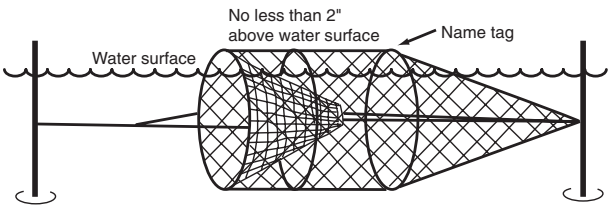


◆ Turtles may be taken by hand, dip net, hook and line, set line, set or bank poles, hooking, or hoop net trap (see allowed design below). No other trap types are allowed.

◆ Set or bankpoles and setlines used for turtle harvest must be licensed, tagged and used in compliance with rules on the use of these lines for fishing. See the Guide to Wisconsin Setline, Set and Bank Pole Regulations, 2013-2014 for details.

◆ Turtles may not be taken by hook and line from trout streams during the closed trout season.

◆ The number of hoop traps that can be operated are 10 in Iowa-Wisconsin or Minnesota-Wisconsin boundary waters and 3 in all other waters of the state.

Hoop net trap specifications: Traps must be made of stretchable fabric (e.g., nylon) and must have a minimum mesh stretch of 6 inches. No wire mesh is allowed. Each trap must have a metal tag showing the name and address of the operator attached, and must be visible above the water's surface. The operator identified on the trap tag is the only person authorized to tend these traps. Traps must be set with the hoops exposed a minimum of two inches above the water's surface. Turtle traps must be checked and the entrapped contents removed at least once each day after the day they are set in all waters.

Single Entrance Hoop Trap