

Nuisance Wildlife Guidelines

General Guidelines and Definitions:

- Landowner: The owner or occupant of any land and members of his or her family may, without a license and subject to all other restrictions except seasons, hunt or trap on their own property for coyote, beaver, fox, raccoon, woodchuck, rabbit, and squirrel year-round.
- Landowner Assistant/Agent: All persons assisting a landowner (i.e., acting as an agent of a landowner) in the removal of animals causing damage must possess the following in accordance with NR 12.10(3)(c):
 - a) A valid hunting license if shooting the animal or a valid trapping license if trapping the animal; and
 - b) Written approval from the landowner, which includes:
 - Name, address, and phone number of landowner;
 - Name, address, and phone number of person removing wild animals;
 - Property location and removal activities;
 - Authorized time period of removal and species of animals authorized for removal; and
 - Signature of the landowner or lessee and date.
- Animal Relocation: Animals that have been live-captured may not be relocated to DNR-controlled lands. When relocating animals to private property, the person must have permission from the owner of the land where the animal is being released, in accordance with NR 12.10(1)(a)3., s. 169.04(2)(a)2.
- Animal Carcass Care and Disposition: Fur from furbearing animals killed under a written animal damage/removal permit may be retained by the trapper, landowner, or agent and sold **only** if the permit authorizes the person to retain the carcasses as a condition of the permit. Furs from furbearing animals which did not require a special permit for harvest, such as beaver, coyote, fox, raccoon, and unprotected species, can be retained by a landowner under the authority of s. 29.337 or by an assistant/agent trapping with written authorization (as described above); furs from these species may also be retained and sold during the closed season.

The fur from rabbits retained by a landowner under the authority of s. 29.337 or by an agent/assistant trapping with written authorization (as described above) may be retained and sold during the closed season. Landowners under the authority of s. 29.337 or agents/assistants trapping with written authorization (as described above) who retain squirrels may sell the tails, skin, claws, and skulls during the closed season. All other animals which are not salvageable must be disposed of in a sanitary manner, or as required in any written permit.

- Trap Tagging Requirement: Each trap used under a trapping license shall be tagged with a metal tag stamped with the name and address or DNR customer ID number of the owner of the trap.

BEAVER

- A nuisance/damage removal permit is not needed for a landowner, lessee, or an agent of the landowner to hunt or trap beaver causing damage [NR 10.13(1)(a)1., s. 29.337(1)].
- Landowners, lessees, or agents of landowners may remove a beaver dam. People who are an agent of the landowner must have written authorization from the landowner to remove the dam (see above requirement for agents) [NR 12.10(1)(b)(3)].
- Only the landowner may set traps on a beaver dam. This privilege cannot be transferred to an agent or employee UNLESS the landowner is a corporation or municipality, in which case an employee or elected official may set traps on a beaver dam [NR 10.13(1)(b)(5)].
- A DNR permit is required to remove a beaver lodge/house, whether active or vacant [s. 29.885(2)(b), and 29.088(3)].
- For more information, see:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/waterways/factsheets/beaverdamage.pdf>

Shooting

- Must comply with shooting hours (1/2 hour before sunrise to 20 minutes past sunset) [NR 10.06(5)].
- No artificial lights or shining are allowed [s. 29.314].
- Must have a valid Small Game, Conservation Patron, or Sports License (landowners are exempt; see above) [s. 29.024(1), 29.337(1)].

Trapping

- May not trap with steel-jawed traps that have a jaw spread larger than 8 inches (at any time) and smaller than 5½ inches, except during the open muskrat/mink season [NR 10.13(1)(b)9, 11]. Traps with teeth must be set underwater at all times [NR 10.13(1)(b)10].
- May not trap with body-gipping-type traps that have a jaw spread less than or equal to 60 square inches, measured from the maximum outside points on the width and height of the jaws of a trap that has not been set, except during the open muskrat/mink season [NR 10.13(1)(b) 11].
- Snares must be set so at least one-half of the set snare is located underwater at all times, must be non-spring-activated, must not exceed 5 feet in length, and the diameter of the wire or cable may not exceed 1/8 inch. Each snare must have a swivel [NR 10.13(1)(b) 13 and 14].
- Agents/assistants must have a Wisconsin trapping license.

MUSKRATS

- Landowners, occupants, and/or agents may, without a permit, trap or shoot muskrats that are causing damage to dikes, dams, shoreline, or roadways [NR 12.10(1)(b)1(d)].
- An agent of the landowner is also required to have a valid hunting or trapping license when removing these animals (see above for agent requirements) [NR 12.10(3)c, 29.024].
- A landowner/occupant may solicit an agent to aid in the removal of muskrats when causing damage [NR 12.10(3)(c)].

BATS

- Eight species of bats are recorded in Wisconsin, and four of the five cave-dwelling bats (Big Brown, Little Brown, Northern Long-eared, and Eastern Pipistrelle) are state-listed as threatened. The fifth species, the Indiana Bat, is federally endangered. All five species are protected [NR 27.03]. The three migratory species of bats recorded in Wisconsin (Eastern Red Bat, Hoary Bat, and Silver-haired Bat) are on the “watch list.”
- Do not attempt to exclude bats during the summer months when the colony is established and the young are unable to fly. Bat exclusions may not be conducted from June 1 through August 15.
- A landowner/occupant may solicit an agent to aid in the removal of these animals when causing damage [NR 12.10(3)(c)].
- No unauthorized person may handle or kill any endangered or threatened species of bat.
- There is a Broad Incidental Take Permit for public health that allows for measures to help the public deal with bat removals in homes and offices; for more information about the permit please see <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ERReview/Documents/BatConservationPlan1-10-11b.pdf> and the form at <http://dnr.wi.gov/files/PDF/forms/2300/2300-330.pdf>.

COYOTE, BEAVER, FOX, RACCOON, WOODCHUCK, RABBIT, AND SQUIRREL

- Landowners and occupants may trap or shoot these species at any time [s. 29.337(1)].
- When causing damage or nuisance, agents may also assist with removal [NR 12.10(1)(b)].
- Landowners/occupants are not required to have a hunting or trapping license to shoot or trap these species on their own property, year-round. However, an agent of the landowner/occupant is required to have a valid hunting and/or trapping license, and if the season is closed, the agent must also have written authorization from the landowner when removing these animals (see above for agent/assistant requirements) [s. 29.337, 29.024. NR 12.10(1)(b)1.c].
- A landowner/occupant may solicit an agent to aid in the removal of these animals when causing damage or nuisance [NR 12.10(3)(c)].

CROWS, COWBIRDS, GRACKLES, AND RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS

- Neither a state nor federal permit is required of any person to shoot or trap these birds when they are committing or about to commit damage upon agricultural crops, livestock, or ornamental or shade trees, or when they constitute a health hazard [NR 12.05].
- Landowners, occupants, and agents of a landowner are not required to have a hunting or trapping license for the removal of these birds when they are causing or about to cause damage.
- If a firearm is used to kill listed birds, nontoxic shot or nontoxic bullets must be used. However, this prohibition does not apply if you use an air rifle, air pistol, or 22-caliber rimfire firearm for the control of listed birds.
- Persons killing the species listed must provide an annual report by January 31st of the following year to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Region 3 Migratory Bird Permit Office. The report must list the person's name, contact information, species killed, number of each species killed, the location and date(s) of kill, and a reason for control.
- NOTE: Any person shooting or trapping the above-mentioned depredating birds shall, at all reasonable times including during actual operations, permit any federal or state agent/warden or other game law enforcement officer free and unrestricted access over the premises on which such operations have been or are being conducted, and shall promptly furnish to such officer whatever information he or she may require concerning said operations [NR 12.05(2)(b)].
- Normal migratory bird hunting hours apply when shooting the above-mentioned depredating birds [NR 10.06].
- Landowners/occupants may solicit an agent to aid in the removal of these animals when they are causing or about to cause damage. An agent is not required to have a hunting/trapping license; however, all other agent requirements apply (see above for agent requirements) [NR 12.10(3)(c)].

UNPROTECTED SPECIES

- Unprotected species include: European starling, English (House) sparrow, coturnix quail, chukar partridge, opossum, porcupine, skunk, weasel, and all other wild mammals not specifically mentioned in the hunting, trapping, and migratory game bird regulations [NR 10.04].
- Landowners/occupants are not required to have a hunting or trapping license to shoot or trap these species year-round on their own property if these species are causing damage or nuisance. Agents of the landowner or occupant are required to have a valid hunting and/or trapping license when removing these animals [NR 10.04 Note, NR 12.10(1)(b) & (3)(c)].
- Landowners/occupants may solicit an agent to aid in the removal of these animals (see above for agent requirements).
- Unprotected species, coyote, fox, and raccoon may be hunted without hunting hour restrictions except:
 - a) If hunting with a bow or crossbow, when all hunting hours apply to all bear and archery deer seasons [NR 10.06(8)(a)].
 - b) During the regular 9-day November gun deer season, when hunting hours apply to all bow and gun hunting.

*This restriction does not apply during the muzzleloader season, youth hunt, 4-day antlerless only hunt, or the Southern Farmland Zone December holiday gun deer season [NR 10.06(8)(b)].

SNAKES, REPTILES, AND AMPHIBIANS

- Several species of reptiles and amphibians are classified as being threatened or endangered. Prior to removal, these animals must be properly identified. If an animal is classified as threatened or endangered, it is then protected as described by s. 29.604 and NR 27.03.
- Timber rattlesnakes, bullsnakes, black rat snakes, and the racer snakes are listed as protected wild animals and may not be killed, except that a timber rattlesnake may be killed in emergency situations involving an immediate threat to human life or domestic animals. Each person who kills a rattlesnake under this provision is asked to provide the department with factual information related to the kill, including the location and date of the kill and the name and address of the person who made the kill; this information should be provided no later than 48 hours after the kill, not to include Saturdays, Sundays and holidays [NR 10.02(9), NR 10.02(10)].
- For those reptiles and amphibians that are not listed as threatened, endangered, or as a protected wild animal, there is a limit to the number of each species that may be taken or killed. There is also an open/closed season for frogs and turtles [NR 10.04, NR 16.12, NR 19.26, NR 19.275, NR 21.13, NR 22.13].
- Specific seasons, trapping methods, and bag limits have been established for turtles depending upon the location of the waterbody they inhabit. See NR 19.275, NR 21.13 and NR 22.13 for specific requirements.
- Landowners/occupants are required to have a fishing or small game license approval to take or kill turtles and may only do so during the open season unless issued a nuisance or damage removal permit [NR 19.275(3)(a)].
- A trapping or hunting license is not required to trap and take or kill snakes and amphibians that are not listed as threatened or endangered.
- No person may take frogs or turtles with the aid of a firearm or air gun [NR 19.26(2)].