



Nuisance Wildlife Guidelines

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

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 Agent/Assistant

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 or trapping license if shooting or trapping the animal.
- b) Written approval from the landowner, which includes:
 - Name, address, and phone number of landowner and person removing wild animals
 - Property location and removal activities
 - Authorized time period of removal
 - Species of animals authorized for removal
 - Signature of the landowner or lessee and date.

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.

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 [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; 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 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.

Beavers

- 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. Agents must have written authorization from the landowner to remove the dam [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>

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, 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 have a swivel, must not exceed 5 feet in length, and the diameter of the wire or cable may not exceed 1/8 inch [NR 10.13(1)(b) 13 and 14].
- Agents/assistants must have a Wisconsin trapping license.

Shooting

- Must comply with shooting hours [NR 10.06(5)].
- No artificial lights or shining [s. 29.314].
- Must have a valid Small Game, Conservation Patron, or Sports License (landowners are exempt) [s. 29.024(1), 29.337(1)].



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)].
- A landowner/occupant may solicit an agent to aid in the removal of muskrats when causing damage [NR 12.10(3)(c)]. An agent of the landowner is required to have a valid hunting or trapping license when removing these animals [NR 12.10(3)c, 29.024].



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 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 [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, live-stock, or ornamental or shade trees, or when they constitute a health hazard [NR 12.05].
- Landowners/occupants may solicit an agent to aid in the removal of these animals when they are causing or about to cause damage [NR 12.10(3)(c)]. Landowners, occupants, and agents 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 permit any federal or state agent/warden free and unrestricted access over the premises on which such operations are conducted, and shall promptly furnish whatever information he or she may require concerning said operations [NR 12.05(2)(b)].
- Normal migratory bird hunting hours apply [NR 10.06].

Snakes, other reptiles, and amphibians



- Several species of reptiles and amphibians are classified as being threatened or endangered. These species cannot be relocated or killed without a permit [s. 29.604, NR 27.03].
- For information and guidance on nuisance snakes, other reptiles, and amphibians, contact Rori Paloski at (608) 264-6040 or Rori.Paloski@Wisconsin.gov.



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. Landowners/occupants may solicit an agent to aid in the removal of these animals. 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)].
- Unprotected species, coyote, fox, and raccoon may be hunted without hunting hour restrictions except when, if hunting with a bow or crossbow, all hunting hours apply to all bear and archery deer seasons [NR 10.06(8)(a)] or during the regular 9-day November gun deer season, when hunting hours apply to all bow and gun hunting.



Bats

- Eight species of bats are recorded in Wisconsin, four of which are cave-dwelling bats (Big Brown, Little Brown, Northern Long-eared, and Eastern Pipistrelle) and are state-listed as threatened and are protected [NR 27.03]. The four migratory species of bats recorded in Wisconsin (Evening Bat, 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)].
- There is a Broad Incidental Take Permit that allows for measures to help the public deal with bat removals in homes and offices; for more information about the permit please see <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ERReview/Documents/BatConservationPlan.pdf> and the form at <http://dnr.wi.gov/files/PDF/forms/2300/2300-330.pdf>.

Questions

If you have questions or are experiencing problems with nuisance bears, wolves or birds, please contact the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services at one of the two district offices in Waupun (920-324-4514) or Rhineland (715-369-5221).

If you have questions or are experiencing nuisance problems with wildlife species other than bears, wolves and birds, please contact your local DNR Service Center.



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