

Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies

TITLE 26. Fisheries & Game

Agency

Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

Subject

Hunting and Trapping

Inclusive Sections

§§ 26-66-1—26-66-15

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Hunting and Trapping

Sec. 26-66-1. Behavior and Actions of Hunters

(a) The method of taking wild birds and wild mammals by hunting shall be restricted to firearms, high velocity air guns using a single ball or pellet type projectile, and compound, long or recurved bow, or crossbow. In designated areas, by special permit, the commissioner may allow the use of modified versions of air guns or archery implements to achieve wildlife management objectives. No arrow or projectile which is coated with or contains any drugs, poison or known tranquilizing substance may be used or possessed while engaged in archery hunting.

(b) Any crossbow and bolt combination to be used for hunting shall meet the following specifications: (1) The draw weight of the crossbow shall be not less than 125 pounds; (2) The crossbow shall have a permanent fixed rifle type stock, and a functional and/or fully operational mechanical safety device; (3) The bolt (arrow) length shall be not less than eighteen inches, excluding the broadhead; and (4) The broadhead shall have two or more blades with a width not less than seven-eighths of an inch at the widest point. In addition, any crossbow in a drawn and cocked position with a bolt loaded in the crossbow shall be considered a loaded weapon.

(c) There shall be no hunting from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise, as provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service, except that raccoon and opossum hunting is permitted after sunset on state-owned lands which are open to hunting and on privately owned lands where landowners do not object, and provided the open season for hunting migratory game birds shall be governed by the provisions of Section 26-66-4 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(d) There shall be no hunting with firearms, discharging of firearms or carrying of loaded firearms within five hundred feet of any building occupied by people or domestic animals or used for storage of flammable or combustible materials, unless written permission of owner of such buildings is obtained and carried while hunting to allow closer shooting distances, except that the above referred to distance shall be not less than two hundred fifty feet unless written permission of owner of such buildings is obtained and carried while hunting to allow closer shooting distances when waterfowl is hunted in tidal water areas from land shooting positions or from floating blinds anchored adjacent to land or from rock formations. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to landowners, their spouses or lineal descendants when hunting within five hundred feet of buildings owned by them or, when hunting waterfowl, within two hundred fifty feet of such buildings, but shall apply when said persons are hunting within said distances of buildings not so-owned.

(e) No hunting weapon shall be discharged toward any person, building or domestic animal when the same is within range or from or across the traveled portion of any public roadway.

(f) Domestic animals, agricultural crops, signs, fences, installations and facilities of utility companies and other property shall not be damaged.

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(g) No dogs shall be trained, run or exercised or be permitted to run at large during the period from June first to the opening of the upland hunting season on any land posted by the Department or its agents against such activity.

(h) Hunting, trapping, fishing and/or trespassing is prohibited on any wildlife refuge, closed area or safety zone posted by the Department or its agents against such activity.

(i) Hunting is prohibited from the traveled portion of a public road or on any road adjacent to any premises used for the breeding, rearing, or holding in captivity of wildlife, or premises used for zoological purposes, or posted by the Department or its agents against such activity.

(j) No animals, except a dog or bird of prey where permitted by law or regulation shall be used in hunting or pursuing any wild bird or wild mammal. Permits to use birds of prey may be issued at the discretion of the commissioner to those persons who are engaged in federal, state or university cooperative research programs for the reestablishment of wild populations of raptors.

(k) No motor vehicle shall be operated or parked upon any public or private road, parking area, lane, passageway, right-of-way, field or lot posted by the Department or its agents against such activity.

(l) Discarding of bottles, glass, cans, paper, junk, litter or trash is prohibited on lands and waters open to hunting or otherwise under the jurisdiction of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(m) Vehicles using department-controlled parking areas shall be parked only in authorized places.

(n) At department-controlled boat launching sites, no boat shall be moored or anchored in a manner that will obstruct or interfere with the launching of other boats, and no boat shall be left unattended in the water or beached on shore unless such boat has, in an exposed area, the name and address of the owner of such boat painted or branded thereon or in any legible manner attached thereto. Any boat anchored, moored, beached or stored in violation of this subsection, and not removed within forty-eight hours after notice has been served on the owner thereof, shall be subject to impoundment at the expense of the owner, and such owner shall be subject to the penalties provided for violations of the provisions of this subsection. For the purpose of this subsection, notice shall be considered to have been served on the owner when a warning card has been affixed to the owner's boat by a representative of the Department.

(o) At department-controlled boat launching areas on inland lakes and ponds, unattended boats left moored, anchored, beached or stored after December fifteenth and before March first shall be subject to impoundment at the expense of the owner and such owner shall be subject to the penalties provided for violations of the provisions of this subsection.

(p) Subject to the provisions of subsection (c) of this section, no person shall hunt raccoons or opossums from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise by the use of a rifle, revolver, or pistol that uses centerfire ammunition or rim fire ammunition having a cartridge case longer than that of a .22 caliber long rifle cartridge case and the

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projectile of which is heavier than 20 grains or by use of shotgun shells larger or heavier than number two shot. No person shall take or attempt to take raccoons or opossums by the use of a light from a motor vehicle.

(q) Rifles and handguns using centerfire ammunition or rim fire ammunition having a cartridge case longer than that of a .22 rim fire long rifle cartridge case and the projectile of which is heavier than 20 grains and shotgun ammunition of loads larger or heavier than number two shot shall not be possessed and pistols or revolvers using ammunition larger or heavier than .22 rim fire long rifle cartridge shall not be used for the purposes of hunting as defined in section 26-1 of the Connecticut General Statutes on any private land during the private land shotgun rifle deer season as specified in section 26-86a-6(b)(7) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. This provision relating to rifle, shotgun and revolver ammunition shall not apply to persons holding valid landowner, private land shotgun rifle and/or revolver deer permits. Waterfowlers hunting from a boat, blind or stationary position may only use the ammunition specified in section 26-66-4 (q) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(r) No person shall hunt, pursue, wound or kill any wildlife from September 1 through the last day of February without wearing above the waist at least a total of four hundred square inches of fluorescent orange clothing visible from all sides. This provision does not apply to:

- (1) archery deer hunting from September 15 through the second Tuesday before Thanksgiving, and January 1 through January 31;
- (2) archery deer hunting from the second Wednesday before Thanksgiving through December 31 while hunting from an elevated tree stand more than 10 feet from the ground;
- (3) archery and firearms turkey hunting;
- (4) waterfowl hunting from blinds or boats or from a stationary position;
- (5) crow hunting from a blind or a stationary position;
- (6) hunting raccoon and opossum from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise;
- (7) deer hunting by a landowner on the landowner's own property; or
- (8) coyote and fox hunting from a blind from September 1 through the first Friday in October, and from January 1 through the last day in February.

(Effective May 16, 1996; Amended May 29, 1998; Amended August 30, 1999; Amended December 18, 2002; Amended April 27, 2005; Amended August 3, 2009; Amended September 9, 2013; Amended July 7, 2016; Amended February 4, 2020)

Sec. 26-66-2. State-owned, State-leased, and Permit-required Hunting Areas; Weapons

(a) Any rifle or handgun using centerfire ammunition may not be used to hunt on state-owned land. Any rifle or handgun that uses rim fire ammunition larger than .22 caliber and shotgun ammunition of loads larger or heavier than number two shot shall not be possessed or used for the purposes of hunting as defined in section 26-1 of the Connecticut General

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Statutes on any state-owned land, including state forests. Muzzleloading rifles larger than .36 caliber or using any projectile other than round ball shall not be possessed or used for the purposes of hunting as defined in section 26-1 of the Connecticut General Statutes on any state-owned land, including state forests, except as provided for in section 26-86c of the Connecticut General Statutes. This provision shall not apply to rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, or revolvers possessed by persons transporting legally killed and properly tagged deer taken on private lands to check stations located on state-owned properties, approved shooting range areas or deer hunting with shotgun or muzzleloader during the open season on such land. Waterfowlers hunting from a boat, blind or stationary position may only use the ammunition specified in section 26-66-4 (q) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(b) Rifles of any caliber and shotgun ammunition of any shot load larger or heavier than number two shot shall not be possessed and pistols or revolvers of any caliber shall not be used for the purposes of hunting as defined in section 26-1 of the Connecticut General Statutes on any state-leased or permit required hunting area during the period starting the third Saturday in October through the last day in February, except by landowners, lessees, their spouses, lineal descendants and regular employees on land owned or leased by them. Waterfowlers hunting from a boat, blind or stationary position may only use the ammunition specified in section 26-66-4 (q) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. This provision shall not apply to combination rifle-shotgun firearms when the rifle portion thereof is, or has been made, inoperative, or to approved shooting range areas on such land. This provision shall not apply to persons holding a valid permit to hunt deer on such land with a revolver, shotgun, rifle or muzzleloader. Trappers actively engaged in legal trapping and raccoon hunters may use handguns using ammunition having a cartridge case not longer than that of a .22 rim fire long rifle cartridge case and the projectile of which is not heavier than 20 grains.

(c) During the period from the last day in February to the third Saturday in October, rifles, pistols or revolvers without regard to caliber, and shotgun ammunition of any load may be used in the legal hunting or taking of wildlife, or for any other legal purpose, on state-leased and permit-required hunting areas only with written permission of the landowner or lessee of the land.

(d) Hunting or possession of any hunting weapon is prohibited in any park or forest recreation area except at predetermined times in such areas as are set aside by the commissioner or the commissioner's designee and posted for such purposes.

(e) Starting the third Saturday in October through the last day in February, hunting or shooting is prohibited on any permit-required hunting area without a written permit or other authorization from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection or an authorized agent of the Department except on lands owned by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection designated as a permit-required hunting area, a written permit or other authorization from the Department is required from the third Saturday in October through the first Saturday in December unless otherwise posted. All such written permits

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or other authorizations shall be returned to the Department, or its authorized agent, within forty-eight hours following expiration of such permit or authorization. Records kept by any authorized agent in issuing such permits or authorizations shall be available for inspection by any state conservation officer or other Department official during normal business hours.

(Effective October 18, 1996; Amended May 29, 1998; Amended April 27, 2005; Amended September 9, 2013; Amended July 7, 2016)

Sec. 26-66-3. Open Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits for Upland Game Birds and Mammals

The following seasons are subject to the closures provided in subsection (i) of this section:

(a) The open season for taking chukar partridge and Hungarian partridge shall be from the third Saturday in October through the last day in February. The daily bag limit shall not exceed two chukar partridge and two Hungarian partridge, and the season bag limit shall not exceed ten chukar partridge and ten Hungarian partridge.

(b) The open season for taking European hare and cottontail rabbit shall be from the third Saturday in October through the last day of February. The daily bag limit shall not exceed one European hare and three cottontail rabbits, and the season bag limit shall not exceed ten European hare and twenty-five cottontail rabbits. The open season for taking ruffed grouse shall be from the third Saturday in October through the last day of November. The open season for taking gray squirrel shall be from the first day in September through the last day of February. The daily bag limit shall not exceed one ruffed grouse and eight gray squirrels and the season bag limit shall not exceed eight ruffed grouse and forty gray squirrels.

(c) The open season for taking snowshoe rabbit shall be from the third Saturday in November through January 31. The daily bag limit shall not exceed two and the season bag limit shall not exceed ten.

(d) The open season for taking raccoon and opossum shall be from the third Saturday in October through the third Saturday in January. During the shotgun season for hunting deer, raccoon and opossum hunting will not be permitted during the daylight hours from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset. The daily bag limit shall not exceed five for raccoon. There shall be no daily or seasonal bag limits on opossum.

(e) The open season for taking quail shall be from the third Saturday in October and continue for two consecutive weeks, except that the season shall continue through the last day in February on the following state-controlled field trial or dog training areas: Dr. John E. Flaherty Field Trial Area, Mansfield Hollow Dam, Nod Brook Management Area and Sugarbrook Field Trial Area. The daily bag limit shall not exceed two and the season bag limit shall not exceed ten.

(f) There shall be no open season on northern and southern flying squirrel, mink, moose, muskrat, beaver, otter, Canada lynx, harbor seal, pine marten, Indiana bat, black bear, fisher, bobcat and mountain lion (*Felis concolor*).

(g) There shall be no closed season except as provided in section 26-66-1 (c) of the

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Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies and no daily or season bag limits on any of the following species: coyote, porcupine, red squirrel, weasel, or skunk.

(h) The open season for taking red fox and gray fox shall be from the third Saturday in October through the last day in February. The daily bag limit shall not exceed three and the season limit shall not exceed thirty, in combination.

(i) There shall be a closed season for all hunting and the training of dogs from the second Saturday in October through one half-hour before sunrise, e.d.t. on the third Saturday in October except for turkey and archery deer hunting; rail and gallinule hunting in tidal marsh; waterfowl hunting; coyote hunting; the hunting of foxes and rabbits under the provisions of section 26-39 of the Connecticut General Statutes; hunting on licensed private shooting preserves operating under the provisions of section 26-48 of the Connecticut General Statutes; junior pheasant hunting training day under the provisions of Section 26-48a-1(a) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies; field trials held under the provisions of section 26-51 and section 26-52 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the training of dogs under the provisions of Section 26-49 of the Connecticut General Statutes; or the training of hunting dogs on any area approved by the Department for this purpose.

(j) The open season for taking woodchuck shall be from March 15 through November 15.

(Effective May 16, 1996; Amended May 29, 1998; Amended December 18, 2002; Amended April 27, 2005; Amended September 9, 2013; Amended July 7, 2016; Amended February 4, 2020)

Sec. 26-66-4. Wild Fowl and Shore Birds

The open season daily bag limit and possession limit for migratory game birds and the method of taking such game birds shall be the same as the open season, daily bag limit, possession limit and methods of taking fixed for such birds by the regulations of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service made under the provisions of an act of Congress relating to migratory birds, and as provided under the provisions of section 26-91 of the Connecticut General Statutes, except as provided in section 26-66-1(c) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(a) No person, except the commissioner, may construct or place any permanent blind or structure for hunting of waterfowl on state-controlled lands or waters. Any such permanent blind or structure may be removed or destroyed by the commissioner at any time.

(b) All waterfowl hunting on state-controlled lands and waters of Great Island, Old Lyme and Ragged Rock Creek, Old Saybrook, shall be from waterfowl hunting blinds only, except that cripples may be recovered by shooting within the area open to hunting.

(c) Waterfowl hunting in the Niantic River in the towns of Waterford and East Lyme is subject to the following regulations:

(1) Hunting is prohibited from shore or in the intertidal area without the permission of the riparian property owner;

(2) Hunting is prohibited in the water areas northerly of an east and west line which touches the southern tip of Sandy Point and includes Keeny Cove;

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- (3) Hunting from boats is permitted only along the midline of the river;
- (4) Hunting is prohibited in Smith Cove and the channel entering Smith Cove in East Lyme.
- (d) Waterfowl hunting is prohibited in Alewife Cove and entrance channel, Waterford and New London, and in Jordan Cove, north from the mean high water line on the northern side of the sand spit and island.
- (e) Except during the regular duck season scaup, scoter, eider and old squaw may be hunted only in coastal waters and all waters of rivers and streams lying seaward from the first upstream bridge.
- (f) There shall be no waterfowl hunting on or from the tidal waters of the inlet between Cuttings Road, Compo Beach Road and Owenoke Park, known as Gray's Creek, Westport.
- (g) There shall be no waterfowl hunting in Cove Pond (Holly Pond) Stamford and Darien north of the dam.
- (h) The open season for taking crows shall be from the second Saturday in January through the last Saturday in March and on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday from the second Saturday in August through November 30.
- (i) There shall be no waterfowl hunting in the tidal waters of Cove Harbor within 100 feet of the mean high tide mark of the Darien shore.
- (j) Except when specifically authorized by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for use during a special hunting season and as published in the migratory bird hunting guide, no person shall take migratory game birds with a shotgun of any description capable of holding more than three shells, unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler, incapable of removal without disassembling the gun, so its total capacity does not exceed three shells.
- (k) Waterfowl hunting in the Thames River in the Town of Waterford is prohibited in Smith Cove northwest and above the railroad tracks, and from the shores and waters in the vicinity of Mamacoke Island in Mamacoke Cove westward of a line running from the easternmost point of land at Harrison's Landing due north to the point where it intersects the southernmost tip of Mamacoke Island, and from the shores and waters within the unnamed cove west of Mamacoke Island southward of a line running due east from the southernmost point of shoreline of the unnamed waterbody west of the railroad tracks, the shores and waters of which shall also be closed to waterfowl hunting, to a point intersecting the shoreline of Mamacoke Island.
- (l) Waterfowl hunting shall be prohibited in the area of Mason's Island known as Ram Point Cove inland of a line extending from the high water mark on the southernmost tip of Ram Point to the southernmost tip of Mason's Island bordering the eastern side of Ram Point Cove.
- (m) There shall be no waterfowl hunting in the Black Hall River in Old Lyme in the area bordered on the south by Route 156 and on the north by the first upstream railroad crossing.
- (n) No person shall kill or wound any waterfowl without making a reasonable effort to retrieve the bird. Any bird which is killed or wounded and not retrieved shall count in the daily bag total.

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(o) A waterfowl hunting party shall include no more than 6 individuals with a minimum distance of 100 yards between parties.

(p) There shall be no waterfowl hunting in Assekonk Swamp, North Stonington.

(q) For waterfowl, coot, and rail hunting, only the following shot shall be used:

(1) Non-toxic steel shot no larger than BB steel, or

(2) Bismuth-tin alloy (97% bismuth and 3% tin), Tungsten Polymer, or tungsten iron shot or tungsten-matrix (95.9% tungsten: 4.1 % polymer), tungsten-nickel-iron (Hevishot) or any other non-toxic shot approved for use by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service no larger than number two. No person may possess lead shot while waterfowl hunting.

(r) (1) There shall be no waterfowl hunting in any direction within a 500 foot radius of the mean high tide mark at Merwin Point in Milford.

(2) There shall be no waterfowl hunting within the area bounded by the shoreline and a line from the southernmost extension of the 500 foot radius at Merwin Point in Milford referenced in subdivision (1) of this subsection westward to the southeastern shoreline at Pond Point in Milford.

(s) Waterfowl hunting is prohibited in the area known as the Cedar Point peninsula, shoreward of a line extending from the southerly tip of the stone breakwall at the eastern end of Compo Beach to the tip of Cedar Point and to the westerly tip of Owenoke Point in Westport.

(t) There shall be no waterfowl hunting in or from the banks of the Mystic River between Route 1 and Route 27 in Mystic and Groton.

(u) There shall be no waterfowl hunting in or from the banks of Ash Creek north of a line drawn from the northern end of the steel railing on the fishing pier in Fairfield to the northern end of the stone seawall in Bridgeport at the mouth of the creek where it enters Long Island Sound.

(v) Waterfowl hunting is prohibited from the shore and water in the Giant's Neck area of East Lyme at the mouth of the Pataguanset River northward of a line running due west from the south end of the fixed pier located at the Giant's Neck Boat Association Launch to the south end of the breakwall located at the end of Point Road.

(w) Waterfowl hunting is prohibited from the shores and waters of Long Island Sound in Greenwich as follows:

(1) In Greenwich Cove, north of a line extending from the easternmost point of land at Willowmere Point to the northernmost point of land on the peninsula immediately north of Meadow Place.

(2) In Cos Cob Harbor, north of a line extending due east from the southeasternmost point of land at the power plant property off of Sound Shore Road to the shoreline adjacent to Glen Avon Road.

(3) In Greenwich Harbor, Smith Cove and Indian Harbor, north of a line extending from the northernmost tip of the area known as Round Island on the west side of Greenwich Harbor to the southernmost tip of the peninsula at the end of Indian Field Road.

(4) In Byram Harbor, north of a line extending northeastward from the end of Dock Road

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to the southeastern most tip of Gamecock Island across Byram Harbor to the southernmost tip of the unnamed peninsula immediately west of Harbor Drive.

(x) Waterfowl hunting is prohibited from the shores and waters of the Branford River in Branford from Route 1 south to Montowese Avenue.

(y) Waterfowl hunting is prohibited from the shores and waters in Post Cove in Deep River southward of the dike that extends across the northern edge of the cove.

(z) Waterfowl hunting is prohibited from the shores and waters in the area known as Long Shore Club Park in Westport shoreward of a line extending from the westerly tip of Owenoke Point to the southwest tip of Hendricks Point.

(aa) Waterfowl hunting at Plum Bank Marsh Wildlife Management Area in Old Saybrook is prohibited north and east of a line extending from Southview Circle southeast to Gull Lane.

(bb) Waterfowl hunting is prohibited from the shores and waters of the Quinnipiac River in New Haven from the Middletown Avenue Bridge south to the Amtrak Route 1 Bridge.

(cc) Waterfowl hunting is prohibited from the shores and waters of the Housatonic River in Milford and Stratford southward from the I-95 bridge to a line extending from Edgemont Road in Milford across the river to Riverview Place in Stratford.

(dd) There shall be no waterfowl hunting on the West River in Guilford between Route 1 and Route 146.

(ee) There shall be no waterfowl hunting on the West River in West Haven between Route 1 and Route 122 (Kimberly Avenue).

(Effective October 18, 1996; Amended October 22, 1997; Amended May 29, 1998; Amended August 30, 1999; Amended December 18, 2002; Amended April 27, 2005; Amended August 3, 2009; Amended October 4, 2011; Amended September 9, 2013; Amended July 7, 2016; Amended February 4, 2020)

Sec. 26-66-5. Trapping. General

(a) Furbearing animals may be taken by deadfall, box trap, live trap, unpadded metal traps not having a spread or opening greater than 5 3/4 inches or padded metal traps not having a spread or opening greater than 5 15/16 inches, and smooth wire traps not having an opening greater than 6 1/2 inches, and species specific traps. For the purposes of this section, the following trap types shall have the features listed: (1) a species specific trap shall have all of the following features: (A) a triggering mechanism and restraining mechanism enclosed by a housing; (B) when set, triggering and restraining mechanisms accessible only via a single opening; (C) an access opening measuring not greater than 2 inches in diameter if round, or not greater than 2 inches diagonally if rectangular in shape; (D) a triggering mechanism that can only be activated by a pulling force; and (E) a swivel mounted anchoring mechanism. (2) a padded metal trap shall have all of the following features: (A) spring strength shall not exceed 55 inch pounds with arms in the closed position and 85 inch pounds with arms in the open position; (B) a gap between the arms of the trap such that in a closed position the gap shall be no less than 1/4 inch in width and no less than 4 inches in length; (C) provides and incorporates replaceable non-weather hardening, non-

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age hardening padding material not less than 3/32 inch thick covering the closing surfaces of, and securely affixed to, the arms; (D) a chain no longer than 6 inches in length; (E) swivels located at each end of the chain, with one center mounted below the trap and (F) a shock absorbing spring incorporated into the anchoring chain. Unpadded metal traps or padded metal traps with a spread or opening not greater than seven and one-half inches, or conibear type traps or similar smooth wire traps not greater than ten inches square may be set for beaver in water bodies occupied or frequented by beaver, including but not limited to lakes, ponds, marshes, swamps, rivers and streams. No traps may have serrations or teeth.

(b) Subject to the provisions of subsection (a) of this section unpadded metal traps and smooth wire traps shall only be placed, set or attended below the surface of the water in a pond, lake, stream, river, spring hole or tidal waters, except smooth wire traps having an opening of four and three quarters inches or less may extend above the surface of the water provided a portion of the trap frame must remain in contact with the water. Subject to the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, padded metal traps shall only be placed, set or attended below the surface of the water in a pond, lake, stream, river, spring hole or tidal waters or in the burrow of wild animal, except from December 1 through January 31, coyotes may be trapped with padded metal traps placed, set or attended on or below the ground on private land subject to the following restrictions: (1) private land parcels shall be a minimum of 10 contiguous acres; (2) any person placing, setting or attending such traps shall carry in possession proof of completion of a land trapping course approved by the commissioner; (3) any person placing, setting or attending such traps shall carry in possession written landowner permission explicitly allowing use of padded metal traps on or below ground; (4) bait shall not be visible; (5) traps shall require a force greater than two pounds to be triggered; (6) traps shall be securely anchored to the ground. No trap shall be placed, set or tended within ten feet of the waterline of a muskrat house or beaver house.

(c) Any device, the object of which is to discharge a firearm, or cause the discharge of any shell, cartridge, explosive, poison or flammable material of any nature, is prohibited when used with any trap.

(d) Any person taking or possessing raw furs or carcasses of any beaver, coyote, fisher, red fox, gray fox, wild mink or river otter shall have such raw fur or carcasses tagged, at no cost, by department representatives or, for coyote, red fox or gray fox taken by hunting, shall report the harvest by telephone or internet to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. Times, dates and locations of the regular tagging sessions and telephone or internet reporting options shall be listed in the abstract of hunting laws and regulations. All raw furs or carcasses shall be tagged or reported by the last scheduled tagging date of the current trapping season or before selling, exchanging, giving away, mailing or transporting beyond state boundaries, retaining for personal use, or otherwise disposing of the raw fur or carcass, whichever comes first. For the purposes of this section, raw fur means a pelt which has not been tanned, mounted or processed in any way. Fisher furs will not be tagged until the carcass of the animal is submitted to the commissioner or the commissioner's designated agent at the time of tagging.

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(e) On privately owned lands, no person shall set, place, or attend any trap unless the person has in their possession the written permission of the owner. Dated permission must be obtained for the current season.

(Effective February 16, 1994; Amended April 27, 2005; Amended September 9, 2013; Amended February 4, 2020)

Sec. 26-66-6. Trapping on state-owned land

In addition to the regulations in subsections (a) to (d) inclusive of section 26-66-5, the following regulations are in effect:

(a) **Definitions:** As used in this section:

(1) “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of Environmental Protection or his or her authorized representative; and,

(2) “Unit or units” means property or portions thereof specifically identified by the commissioner.

(b) No person shall trap on state-owned property without written authorization from the commissioner. Such authorization to trap on state-owned property shall be issued to all persons qualified pursuant to subsection (c) of this section in the order in which completed registration forms and required fees are recorded as received by the commissioner.

(c) The Commissioner may authorize trapping on units of state-owned property during the open trapping seasons specified in section 26-66-7(b) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies by any person who: (1) submits proof of having a valid license to trap in Connecticut issued pursuant to section 26-27 of the Connecticut General Statutes; (2) submits proof of having a certificate of completion of the Connecticut Trapper Education Course as described in section 26-31(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes; (3) is 16 years of age or older; (4) certifies in writing on a form furnished by the commissioner that he or she has not been convicted of violating any Connecticut statute or regulation governing trapping during the previous three years’ trapping seasons; and, (5) submits to the commissioner a completed registration form provided by the commissioner and the fee specified in subsection (d) of this section.

(d) The fee to trap on each unit of state-owned property for a trapping season as defined in section 26-66-7(b) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies shall be sixty dollars per unit. This fee is non-refundable.

(e) All trapping authorized under this section shall be confined within the boundaries of the unit described on the authorization issued by the commissioner. The authorization issued under this section is not transferable.

(f) Any person authorized to trap on state-owned property shall maintain, for each unit, up-to-date, complete and accurate daily records of trapping activity on forms provided by the commissioner. Any person authorized to trap on state-owned property shall, while trapping, make such records available for inspection upon request by the commissioner. The daily records of trapping activity shall include the number of traps set each day and the number and species of animals caught each day. At any time during the trapping season,

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the commissioner may require that the daily records of trapping activity be submitted to the commissioner not more than three days after being requested. At the end of the trapping season, each person authorized to trap on state-owned property shall submit to the commissioner a completed season summary of the daily records of trapping activity for each unit on forms provided by the commissioner. The season summary for each unit shall be submitted to the commissioner not more than thirty days after the close of the season for which the authorization was issued. Any person failing to submit a complete season summary or provide daily records of trapping activity as requested shall not be issued an authorization to trap on any unit for the next season.

(g) The commissioner may at any time: (1) revoke an authorization to trap for violating the terms of an authorization or any other statute or regulation governing trapping in the State of Connecticut, or any limitation imposed by the Commissioner under this subsection in accordance with the provisions of the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act; (2) prohibit trapping during specified dates and times; (3) close a unit or certain areas within a unit; (4) restrict the types of traps and their placement; and, (5) limit the number of a particular species that may be trapped.

(h) Any person authorized by the commissioner to trap pursuant to this section may use assistants under the age of 16 provided that prior written authorization is obtained from the commissioner and the assistants meet the requirements of subsection (c)(1), (2) and (4) of this section. No fee shall be charged by the commissioner for such authorization.

(i) For the purposes of wildlife management, the commissioner may remove any fur-bearing animal at any time from a unit.

(Effective October 3, 1972; Amended October 29, 2001)

Sec. 26-66-7. Seasons and bag limits for trapping furbearing animals

(a) There shall be no daily or season bag limit for trapping any species of fur-bearing animal for which an open trapping season is provided, except that the otter season bag limit shall be eight and the fisher season bag limit shall be two.

(b) The open season for trapping raccoon, wild mink, muskrat, river otter, gray fox, red fox, coyote, opossum, weasel and skunk shall be from the first Sunday following the first Saturday in November through March 15th. The open season for trapping fisher shall be from November 20th through December 31st. The open season for trapping beaver shall be from December 1 through March 31st.

(c) There shall be no open season for trapping snowshoe rabbit (varying hare), cottontail rabbit, gray squirrel, European hare, porcupine, red squirrel, woodchuck, Canada lynx, pine marten, black bear, bobcat, mountain lion (*Felis concolor*), Indiana bat and harbor seal.

(Effective January 1, 1993; Amended August 30, 1999; Amended April 27, 2005; Amended August 3, 2009; Amended February 4, 2020)

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Sec. 26-66-8. Sale of game (Repealed)

Repealed June 11, 2014.

(Effective February 1, 1990; Repealed June 11, 2014)

Notes: For 2014 repeal, see Sec. 54 of Public Act 14-187. (June 11, 2014)

Sec. 26-66-9. Repealed

Repealed September 15, 1976.

Sec. 26-66-10. Birds. Open coastal waters beyond outer harbor limits

The definition of “open coastal waters beyond outer harbor limits” for the purpose of hunting migratory waterfowl in Connecticut shall be all coastal waters and all waters of rivers and streams lying seaward from the first upstream bridge.

(Effective January 7, 1964)

Sec. 26-66-11. Wildlife management study areas

On areas designated by posting as Wildlife Management Study Areas, hunters and others using the area shall be required to observe the following, when so indicated by posting:

- (a) Enter and leave the area only at authorized check stations;
- (b) Use the area by permit only, obtained at the check station on a first come-first served basis, in numbers to be determined by the department of environmental protection.
- (c) Wear on the area, at all times, an arm band or other visible identification furnished at the check station;
- (d) Persons using the area will be issued a permit only when willing to cooperate in the study and allow removal of bands and tags from the game taken, crops and the first joint from one wing of birds and similar sampling of wildlife in the bag.

(Effective September 27, 1979)

Sec. 26-66-12. Wild Turkey Seasons, Bag Limits, Firearms, Ammunition, Archery Equipment, Methods, Permits, Tags and Reporting

(a) Season and bag limit:

(1) Spring Season. In such areas of the state as designated by the commissioner and listed in the applicable annual Connecticut Hunting and Trapping Guide, the open spring season for hunting bearded wild turkey on private and state lands shall begin the last Wednesday in April and end the last Saturday in May. From the second Saturday before the last Wednesday in April through the first Saturday before the last Wednesday in April shall be designated as junior turkey hunting training days. On these days, only hunters having a valid Connecticut junior hunting license and a Resident Gamebird Stamp may hunt on state land or on private lands for which they have written permission from the land owner. The accompanying adult mentor shall have in his/her possession a valid Connecticut hunting license, a Resident Gamebird Stamp and written permission from the landowner when hunting on private lands. The adult mentor shall not carry a firearm, but may assist in calling.

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The adult mentor shall remain within physical contact of, and in a position to provide direct supervision and instruction of, the junior hunter at all times. Hunting shall be allowed from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset. The season bag limit shall be five bearded wild turkeys.

(2) Fall Archery Season. In such areas of the state as designated by the commissioner and listed in the applicable annual Connecticut Hunting and Trapping Guide, the open fall season for hunting either bearded or non-bearded wild turkey with bow and arrow on private and state lands shall run concurrently with the archery deer season as specified in Section 26-86a-6(b) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. Hunting shall be allowed from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset. The season bag limit shall be two wild turkeys.

(3) Fall Firearms Season. In such areas of the state as designated by the commissioner and listed in the applicable annual Connecticut Hunting and Trapping Guide, the open fall firearms season for hunting either bearded or non-bearded wild turkey with firearms on private and state lands shall begin on the first Saturday in October and end on October 31. Hunting shall be allowed from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset. The season bag limit shall be three wild turkeys.

(b) Firearms, ammunition, archery equipment.

During the regulated seasons, Wild turkey may only be hunted as specified with a 20 gauge or larger shotgun, smooth bore muzzleloader of 20 gauge or larger, or with bow and arrow. Shot sizes in all firearms shall be restricted to #4, 5, 6, 7, or 7 1/2. A shotgun used to hunt wild turkey shall not be capable of holding more than three shells and have its magazine plugged with a one-piece filler, incapable of removal without disassembling the gun, so its total capacity does not exceed three shells. Bow and arrow as used in this regulation section means a long, recurved or compound bow with a minimum draw weight of 40 pounds, or crossbow with a minimum draw weight of 125 pounds. The arrowhead shall have two or more blades and may not be less than seven-eighths of an inch at the widest point.

(c) Method of take

(1) No person shall hunt, pursue, kill, take or attempt to take any wild turkey without a validated turkey permit, in addition to the license required by Section 26-27 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

(2) No animal, including a dog, may be used in hunting or pursuing any wild turkey, except that a dog may be used to hunt turkey during the fall firearms season on private lands only.

(3) No person shall take or attempt to take any wild turkey with the aid of real or artificial bait; over any baited area; with the use of electronic amplified turkey calling device or live decoy.

(4) No person shall take or attempt to take any wild turkey by participating in a cooperative drive or assist in hunting, pursuing or killing of wild turkeys without a validated permit. This provision shall not prohibit a hunter that has harvested all of the turkeys allowed under their permit from calling for another hunter with a valid turkey permit.

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(5) It shall be unlawful to shoot from a building or other permanent structure.

(6) No person shall take or attempt to take any wild turkey which is roosted in a tree.

(d) **Written consent.**

No person shall hunt or assist with the hunting of wild turkey on private land without carrying dated written permission of the landowner for the current season. During the spring and fall firearms seasons such written consent shall be on forms provided by the commissioner. Only those consent forms completely filled out, signed and dated by the landowner shall be valid. Persons hunting pursuant to section subsection (e)(2)(A) of this section shall not be required to carry written consent.

(e) **Permits and tags.**

(1) (A) During both the spring and the fall firearms turkey seasons an individual may apply for and purchase one state land and one private land permit. Application for all permits except state land designated areas requiring lottery selection shall be made on forms provided by the commissioner and shall be accompanied by the appropriate fee, as specified in Section 26-48a-2 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(B) The issuance of permits on designated state-owned lands for the spring and fall firearms seasons shall be on the basis of a random selection of single accurately completed applications on forms provided by the commissioner. The total number of permits to be issued shall be predetermined by the commissioner and announced prior to the actual selection of permits. Upon notification of selection, the applicant shall return such notice with the appropriate fee as specified in section 26-48a-2.

(2) (A) Upon receipt of a completed application signed by a landowner of record, the commissioner shall issue, without fee, a private land turkey hunting permit to the owner(s) of ten or more adjoining acres of private land and the husband or wife, parent, grandparent, sibling, and/or any lineal descendant of such owner(s), provided no such owner, husband, or wife, parent, grandparent, sibling, or lineal descendant shall be issued more than one such permit per season. Such permit shall be valid for hunting on the owner's land as specified in the permit application.

(B) The land listed in the application shall:

(i) Be located in a designated turkey hunting zone; and

(ii) Repealed June 11, 2014.

(3) No wild turkey permit may be used unless it is validated by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and signed by the hunter upon receipt. Such permit is valid only for the state land area and hunting period, or private land for which it is identified. A valid wild turkey permit shall be carried while hunting.

(4) Immediately upon killing a wild turkey, and before moving the carcass in any manner from where it was killed, a person shall write their conservation identification number; name; date and time of kill; town of kill; and permit type on a tag and then sign their name. This tag, signed and with complete information, shall be kept with the turkey at all times.

(5) No person shall change or alter a turkey permit or tag or loan to another or allow another to have or use such permit or tag issued to himself or use any permit or tag issued

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to another.

(6) During the spring season a person may obtain a single private land permit and a single state land permit. During the fall season a person may obtain a single archery permit, a single private land firearms permit and a single state land firearms permit.

(7) Information contained in the application for such turkey permit which is determined to be false or misleading shall be cause for rejecting such application or revoking such permit.

(f) Reporting.

(1) All spring and fall permittees, whether having taken a turkey or not, who are contacted by the Department for the purposes of surveying turkey hunting activity shall complete a hunting season activity report by the method specified in the hunting and trapping guide published annually by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(2) During the open spring firearms/archery season, the open fall firearms season or the open fall archery season, the fully completed and signed tag specified in subsection (e)(4) of this section shall remain with any harvested turkey until it is packaged for consumption or mounted for display. The fully completed and signed tag kept with a turkey harvested in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations shall constitute lawful possession, provided that the reporting required under subdivision (3) of this subsection has been completed.

(3) Any person taking a turkey during the open spring firearms/archery season, the open fall firearms season or the open fall archery season shall report the taking of such turkey within 24 hours after taking such turkey by the method specified in the Hunting and Trapping Guide published annually by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(Effective October 18, 1996; Amended August 30, 1999; Amended December 18, 2002; Amended April 27, 2005; Amended August 3, 2009; Amended September 9, 2013; Amended June 11, 2014; Amended February 4, 2020)

Notes: Publisher's note: Public Act 14-187 repealed subsection (e)(2)(B)(ii) , effective June 11, 2014. (June 11, 2014)

Reptiles and Amphibians

Sec. 26-66-13. Seasons, bag limits, and methods for taking amphibians

(a) There shall be no open season for taking Jefferson Salamanders, (*Ambystoma jeffersonianum*), Blue-spotted Salamanders, (*Ambystoma laterale*), Tremblay's Salamanders, (*Ambystoma tremblayi*), Silvery Salamanders, (*Ambystoma platineum*), Eastern Spadefoot Toads, (*Scaphiopus h. holbrookii*), Red-spotted Newts, (*Notophthalmus v. viridescens*), and Northern Leopard Frogs, (*Rana pipiens*), in any developmental stage.

(b) The open season for taking adult Spotted Salamanders, (*Ambystoma maculatum*), and adult Marbled Salamanders, (*Ambystoma opacum*), shall be from May 1 through August

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31. During the open season, adult Spotted Salamanders and Marbled Salamanders shall only be taken by hand or hand-held implement. No person shall take any adult Spotted Salamanders or Marbled Salamanders by seine net. The daily and season bag limit shall not exceed three (3) of each species. There shall be no open season for taking eggs or juveniles of these species. For purposes of this section, "seine net" means a net with sinkers on one edge and floats on the other that hangs vertically in the water and encloses aquatic wildlife when its ends are pulled together or are drawn ashore.

(Effective January 1, 1986; Amended May 29, 1998; Amended February 4, 2020)

Sec. 26-66-14. Seasons, Bag Limits, and Methods for Taking Reptiles

(a) There shall be no open season for taking Bog Turtles, (*Glyptemys muhlenbergii*), Wood Turtles, (*Glyptemys insculpta*), Diamondback Terrapins, (*Malaclemys terrapin*), Eastern Box Turtles, (*Terrapene c. carolina*), and Spotted Turtles, (*Clemmys guttata*) in any developmental stage.

(b) The open season for taking Black Rat Snakes, *Elaphe o. obsoleta*, shall be from May 1 through August 31. During the open season, Black Rat Snakes shall only be taken by hand or hand-held implement. The daily and season bag limit shall not exceed one (1). However, there shall be no open season for taking eggs of this species.

(c) Repealed

(d) Seasons, bag limits, size restrictions, methods and gear limitations for taking common Snapping Turtles (*Chelydra serpentina*).

(1) The open season for taking snapping turtles shall be from July 15 through September 30.

(2) The daily bag limit shall be five (5) and the seasonal bag limit shall be ten (10).

(3) During the open season only snapping turtles having a straight line upper shell (carapace) length of 13 inches minimum shall be taken. There is no open season for taking snapping turtle eggs. Nests shall not be disturbed without prior authorization from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

(4) Snapping Turtles may be taken by hand, dip net, turtle hook, floating or non-floating turtle trap, and personally attended hook and line only. The use of firearms, poison, explosives, seines, gill nets or fyke nets is prohibited.

(5) No person may set, place or attend more than three (3) total turtle traps at any given time. Traps used shall be constructed and set in a manner to allow turtles to surface and breathe, and shall be constructed of mesh at least one inch wide at the narrowest measurement. All traps shall have a functional escape hole provided with a minimum diameter in all directions of 7.5 inches to allow the passage of fish and small turtles. Trap size shall not exceed 4 feet x 4 feet x 4 feet, except that hoop-style traps may be up to 84" in total length. Traps shall be tagged with a plate or tag visible above the water line bearing the Conservation Identification Number of the user. No person shall use a turtle trap without obtaining a snapping turtle trapping endorsement on such person's Conservation License. Such endorsement shall be issued without fee and shall be carried at all times while engaged

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in turtle trapping. Only the operator identified on the tag may tend the trap. All traps shall be lifted or tended and emptied of catch at least once in a 24 hour period. Any wildlife otherwise protected shall be immediately released at the point of capture.

(6) No person shall use a turtle trap on any body of water owned, leased or otherwise under control of the department without written authorization from the department.

(7) The restrictions in subdivisions (1), (2), (3) and (5) of this subsection shall not apply to private pond or lake owners or owners of aquaculture facilities trapping for the purposes of releasing turtles back into the wild at another location.

(Effective January 1, 1993; Amended May 29, 1998; Amended April 27, 2005; Amended September 9, 2013; Amended July 7, 2016)

Sec. 26-66-15. Guide

For purposes of regulations promulgated under Section 26-66 and Section 26-86a of the general statutes, “guide” means the applicable annual Connecticut Hunting and Trapping Guide issued by the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection.

(Adopted effective August 30, 1999)