

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.

(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 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)