

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Statutory Authority: 7 Delaware Code, Sections 102(a), 103(a) and (b), 801, and 7 Delaware Code, Chapter 60 (7 Del.C. §§102(a), 103(a) & (b), 801, & 7 Del.C. Ch. 60)
7 DE Admin. Code 3900

FINAL

ORDER

3900 Wildlife

Secretary's Order No.: 2025-F-0037

RE: Approving Final Amendments to 7 DE Admin. Code 3900: *Wildlife*

Date of Issuance: December 8, 2025

Effective Date of the Amendment: January 11, 2026

Under the authority vested in the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control ("Department" or "DNREC"), and pursuant to 7 Del C. §§102(a), 103(a) and (b), 801, the general authority as provided under 7 Del.C. Chapter 60, and all other relevant statutory authority, the following findings of fact based on the record, reasons and conclusions are entered as an Order of the Secretary in the above-referenced promulgation.

Background, Procedural History and Findings of Fact

This Order relates to the Department's proposed regulatory amendments to 7 DE Admin. Code 3900: *Wildlife* ("Amendments"). The Department's Division of Fish and Wildlife ("DFW") is proposing to amend eight (8) sections of Delaware's existing Wildlife regulations pertaining to the management and conservation of wildlife, including activities involving hunting and activities authorized on Division-owned lands. Specifically, amendments are being proposed within the following sections: 2.0 *Method of Take*, 3.0 *Federal Laws and Regulations Adopted*, 4.0 *Seasons*, 5.0 *Wild Turkeys*, 7.0 *Deer*, 8.0 *General Rules and Regulations Governing Land and Waters Administered by the Division*, 20.0 *Game Bird Releases*, and 23.0 *Non-native/Invasive Wildlife*.

In addition to the Amendments being proposed to the sections noted above, there are numerous clerical changes being made throughout the existing Wildlife regulations (i.e., updating formatting and style) to comply with the current *Delaware Administrative Code Drafting and Style Manual*.

The Department's proposed Amendments serve to provide additional hunting opportunities in Delaware, such as the expansion of current seasons, the removal of age restrictions, and the elimination or modification of harvest reporting requirements. Other proposed Amendments clarify appropriate seasons to use certain types of firearms and allow the use of motorized carts to transport game or equipment.

The following section of this Order provides a brief description of the Department's proposed Amendments, as published in the State of Delaware *Register of Regulations* on August 1, 2025:

Section 2.0: Method of Take

The proposed Amendments within Section 2.0 are needed to revise existing ambiguous language contained therein, specifically, to clarify the seasons for which muzzleloaders may be used to harvest deer.

Section 3.0: Federal Laws and Regulations Adopted

The proposed Amendments within Section 3.0 are needed to bring Delaware's existing regulations into compliance with federal laws. Specifically, the proposed Amendments to Section 3.0 will allow all hunters under the age of sixteen (16) to participate during the special youth hunts for waterfowl and migratory gamebirds.

Section 4.0: Seasons

The proposed Amendments within Section 4.0 are needed to adjust existing seasons and remove certain harvesting requirements. Delaware's existing regulatory language in this Section is outdated, as it reflects past restrictions of Sunday hunting for game birds; that law was amended several years ago by Delaware's General Assembly. The Department's proposed changes would provide hunters with more weekend hunting opportunities.

Additionally, the removal of present mandatory reporting requirements is reflective of the Department's shift towards collecting harvest information through alternative means. The proposed Amendments to Section 4.0 will (1) allow crow hunting on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from the fourth Friday in June through the last Sunday in March; and (2) eliminate the gray fox harvest reporting requirement.

Section 5.0: Wild Turkeys

The proposed Amendments within Section 5.0 are needed to extend existing seasons, remove erroneous text regarding harvest reporting, and to modify age restrictions for youth hunts. As is the case in the previous Section, the existing regulatory language in Section 5.0 is outdated, as it reflects past restrictions of Sunday hunting for game birds; as noted previously, that law was amended several years ago by the General Assembly. Additional outdated regulatory language defining turkey harvesting requirements will be removed to reflect the shift towards electronic reporting.

Specifically, the proposed Amendments to this Section will (1) clarify that the turkey season will now end on Sunday instead of Saturday; (2) eliminate obsolete turkey harvest reporting requirements; and (3) allow all hunters under the age of 16 to participate in the special youth hunts for turkeys.

Section 7.0: Deer

The proposed Amendments within Section 7.0 are needed to modify age restrictions for youth hunts. Specifically, the proposed changes will allow all hunters under the age of 16 to participate in the special youth hunts for deer.

Section 8.0: General Rules and Regulations Governing Land and Waters Administered by the Division

The proposed Amendments within Section 8.0 are needed to allow motorized electric carts, wagons, or wheelbarrows to transport hunting and fishing equipment or game and fish on lands administered by the Division, provided they are not ridden or used to transport any person. The Department notes that anyone using such equipment must walk during the duration of its use.

Section 20.0: Game Bird Releases

The proposed Amendments within Section 20.0 are needed to revise erroneous text regarding the differentiating number of gamebirds released, specifically, to clarify which permit an individual would need in such instances.

Section 23.0: Non-Native/Invasive Wildlife

The proposed Amendments within Section 23.0 are needed to extend existing seasons, and to remove certain harvesting requirements to reflect the Department's shift towards collecting harvest information through alternative means. Specifically, the proposed Amendments to this Section will (1) extend the coyote hunting season from July 1 to June 30; and (2) eliminate the coyote harvest reporting requirement.

The Department has the statutory basis and legal authority to promulgate the above proposed Amendments, pursuant to 7 *Del.C.* §§102(a), 103(a) and (b), 801, and the general authority provided to the Department under 7 *Del.C.* Ch. 60.

Department staff, as well as members of the public, attended the public hearing held on August 27, 2025. Comments were received from the public by the Department at the time of the public hearing, as well as during both the pre- and post-hearing phases of this promulgation. Pursuant to 29 *Del.C.* §10118(a), the Record remained open subsequent to the date of the public hearing for receipt of public comment through September 12, 2025.

At the request of Hearing Officer Lisa A. Vest, the Department's subject matter experts in the DFW provided a Technical Response Memorandum ("TRM") for the benefit of the Record generated in this matter. The Department's TRM, dated October 1, 2025, is discussed in greater detail below. It should be noted that all notification and noticing requirements concerning this matter were met by the Department. Proper notice of the hearing was provided as required by law.

Following receipt of the Department's TRM, Hearing Officer Vest prepared her Hearing Officer's Report ("Report") dated December 2, 2025. The Report expressly incorporated the following documents into the Record generated in this matter, and attached the same to the Report as Appendices "A" and "B," respectively:

- **Appendix "A"**: The Department's proposed Amendments, as published in the August 1, 2025, Delaware Register of Regulations; and
- **Appendix "B"**: TRM dated October 1, 2025.

The Report documents the proper completion of the required regulatory amendment process, establishes the Record, and recommends the adoption of the proposed Amendments as final.

Reasons and Conclusions

Currently pending before the Department is the adoption of the *revised* proposed Amendments to 7 DE Admin. Code 3900, *Wildlife*. The following section of this Report addresses the specific areas of concern mentioned in the public comments received by the Department in this matter and provides the DFW's responses to the same.

1. Section 8.0: General Rules and Regulations Governing Land and Waters Administered by the Division

The DFW received several comments in opposition to the permitting of motorized carts, wagons, or wheelbarrows utilized to transport equipment or harvested game on lands administered by the Division. Specifically, concerns were raised that the use of such devices would lead to an increased hunting presence and the disturbance of state wildlife areas (which already receive significant pressure by hunters). One commenter stated that it was inappropriate to allow such motorized devices while restricting the use of other motorized conveyances (such as e-bikes). Another commenter indicated that such devices should only be permitted to haul game, so as to minimize environmental impacts on the state wildlife areas.

In response to these comments, the DFW believes that permitting the use of motorized carts, wagons, or wheelbarrows will not increase hunter numbers on state wildlife areas, as they anticipate individuals who might use such devices are likely already hunting in these public areas. Rather, the Division believes that permitting such devices may assist in retaining participation from the aging hunting population. Additionally, the Division does not believe that the use of such devices will lead to environmental impacts on our public areas, as they are extremely slow (unlike an e-bike), and any noise disturbance would be comparable to an individual dragging out a harvested deer or carrying in hunting equipment.

2. Section 23.0: Non-native/Invasive Species

The majority of the comments received by the Department in this promulgation concerned the proposed extension of the coyote hunting season from its current length of six months to year-round. The Department anticipated the

increased public feedback on this particular proposal, as the DFW received extensive feedback when the coyote regulations were first established in 2014.

Five (5) of the comments received by the Department on Section 23.0 were in support of the extension of the hunting season, while six (6) individuals opposed it. Those in support of this proposal believed that extending the coyote season would allow hunters to better manage this invasive/non-native species and help prevent impacts to native wildlife while increasing hunting opportunities. One commenter stated that coyotes should be eradicated from Delaware because they are an invasive/non-native species, while another commenter supported the expansion of the hunting season because they had seen coyotes in their suburban 55+ community and, being disabled, feared for both their and their pet's safety.

The commenters in opposition to the year-round extension of the coyote hunting season voiced numerous reasons for the same. Several commenters noted that coyotes, as predators of deer, may help to control Delaware's deer population and reduce agricultural crop damage. Other comments referenced the importance of predators like coyotes in maintaining healthy ecosystems. One commenter believed that coyotes are not a threat to pets or livestock; rather, their presence may help to create a balance of nature in Delaware. Another commenter mentioned the role predators play in preventing the transmission of diseases such as Chronic Wasting Disease ("CWD") in deer, while one commenter expressed frustration with the Department for expanding hunting seasons to generate more revenue.

The most extensive comments originated from the *Northeast Regional Director of the Humane World for Animals* (formerly known as the *Humane Society of the United States*). This organization strongly opposed the extension of the coyote hunting season to year-round and the elimination of the requirement for coyote hunters and trappers to report their kills. In support thereof, the organization cited studies asserting that year-round hunting of coyotes does not reduce their population; rather, it could potentially increase it by disrupting the species' social structure (thereby encouraging more breeding and migration). The organization further stated that research has shown that the year-round hunting of coyotes does not prevent livestock conflicts, and could even exacerbate them, again, based on the disruption of coyote pack structure. Additionally, they stated that the year-round hunting of coyotes would not result in an increased population of game animals, especially deer, as coyote populations are not limiting deer numbers. Lastly, the organization declared that the indiscriminate hunting of coyotes would remove an ecologically important species from the landscape, leading to the orphaning and starvation of dependent young.

In response to these comments, the TRM notes that extensive scientific studies conducted in Pennsylvania (as well as research done by the DFW in collaboration with the University of Delaware) have shown that coyotes are not significant predators of deer in the Mid-Atlantic region. Unlike in New England areas, the Mid-Atlantic region does not typically have sufficient deep snow for an extended period (thus making deer more vulnerable to coyote predation).

Additionally, unlike many southern states, deer in the Mid-Atlantic region have a synchronous breeding cycle, where the fawning season is relatively short. Consequently, most fawns have been born and are mobile enough to escape predation by the time coyotes become aware that fawns are available. Therefore, it is the DFW's opinion that coyotes are not a significant predator of deer in Delaware, and as such, the expansion of their hunting season is not being proposed to increase or decrease deer populations.

The DFW further notes in the TRM that some of the comments made by the above organization are counterintuitive, such as their position that expanding the hunting season will likely increase the coyote population in Delaware. For example, they state that an increased harvest will cause a disruption of the coyote's social structure (thus leading to increased breeding); however, they also state that a year-round hunting season will also increase the mortality of young coyotes. The Department notes that, in practice, Pennsylvania and other nearby states have had year-round coyote hunting seasons for decades with little impact, positively or negatively, to the statewide coyote population. One point the DFW does agree with is that there is over a century's worth of data showing that hunting, trapping and even extensive predator control methods (i.e., bounties and poisoning) will not control coyotes on a landscape or even a statewide level. Ultimately, what will determine how many coyotes are in Delaware are the coyotes themselves.

Additionally, the DFW notes that the proposed expansion to the hunting season is not intended to better manage the species on a statewide level, but rather to improve management of coyotes at the local or land parcel level. Increasing hunting opportunities for landowners can be very effective in reducing local numbers of coyotes, as year-round hunting pressure provides more opportunities for harvest and can cause coyotes to abandon an area. Although DNREC has had a year-round coyote depredation order in effect since 2014, it is only intended for use when there is an imminent threat of injury to people, livestock, or pets. Currently, there is no legal means for a landowner to remove coyotes from their property outside the current September – February hunting season in the absence of such an imminent threat as noted above. The proposed year-round coyote hunting season will provide these landowners with another wildlife management tool, similar to the DFW's deer damage program that provides landowners a mechanism to protect their agricultural crops.

Although the DFW is proposing to eliminate the reporting requirement for hunter and trapper harvested coyotes, they believe this information can be accurately calculated through their annual hunter and trapper harvest surveys, which are currently used to estimate the harvest of all other furbearers like red foxes, raccoons, muskrats and opossums. After eleven years of gathering coyote harvest data, the DFW believes that the reporting requirement is unnecessary, and that by switching to the annual harvest surveys, the Department will be better able to compare harvest and population trends of coyotes with those of other furbearers – which would be important if population trends of these mesocarnivores were to be effected by a disease outbreak or a change in furbearers hunting or trapping pressure. Lastly, it is important to note that the reported coyote harvest in Delaware has remained stable and very low since the DFW established a coyote

hunting and trapping season and a depredation order in 2014. During the four-year period between 2020-2023, the reported harvest has been 8, 4, 5 and 12 individual coyotes, respectively. The DFW does not anticipate a year-round hunting season to significantly increase harvest numbers; however, as previously noted, it will allow landowners an additional wildlife management tool and increased hunting opportunities.

Based on the Record developed in this matter, I find and conclude that the Department has provided appropriate reasoning regarding the need for the proposed Amendments. Accordingly, I recommend promulgation of the proposed Amendments to 7 DE Admin. Code 3900: *Wildlife*, in the customary manner provided by law.

Further, the following reasons and conclusions are entered:

1. The Department has the statutory basis and legal authority to act with regard to the proposed Amendments to 7 DE Admin. Code 3900: *Wildlife*, pursuant to 7 *Del.C.* §§102(a), 103(a) and (b), and 801;
2. The Department has jurisdiction under its statutory authority, pursuant to 7 *Del. C.* Ch. 60, to issue an Order adopting the proposed Amendments as final;
3. The Department provided adequate public notice of the proposed Amendments and all proceedings in a manner required by the law and regulations, and provided the public with an adequate opportunity to comment on the proposed Amendments, including at the time of the virtual public hearing held on August 27, 2025, and during the days subsequent to the public hearing (through September 12, 2025), in order to consider all public comment on the same before making any final decision;
4. Promulgation of the proposed Amendments will enable DNREC to provide additional hunting opportunities in Delaware with the expansion of current seasons, the removal of age restrictions, and the elimination or modification of harvest reporting requirements. Additionally, the proposed Amendments will clarify the appropriate seasons to use certain types of firearms and allow the use of motorized carts to transport game or equipment. Lastly, the proposed Amendments further serve to provide minor administrative updates to correct grammar and misspellings, and to bring the existing Wildlife regulations into current formatting style;
5. The Department has reviewed the proposed Amendments in the light of the Regulatory Flexibility Act, consistent with 29 *Del.C.* Ch. 104, and believes the same to be lawful, feasible, and desirable, that it will not establish substantive additional costs for individuals or small businesses, and that the recommendations as proposed should be applicable to all Delaware individuals or small businesses equally;
6. Further, the Department has reviewed this proposed regulatory promulgation in the light of 7 *Del.C.* §10003 and 29 *Del.C.* §10118(b)(3), and has determined that conducting such an assessment regarding the impact of this regulation on the achievement of the State of Delaware's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets is not practical;
7. The Department's Hearing Officer's Report, including its established Record and the recommended proposed Amendments as set forth in its Appendix "A" attached thereto, are hereby adopted to provide additional reasons and findings for this Order;
8. The Department's proposed Amendments, as published in the August 1, 2025, *Delaware Register of Regulations*, then fully vetted to the public at the aforementioned public hearing held on August 27, 2025, are adequately supported, are not arbitrary or capricious, and are consistent with the applicable laws and regulations. Consequently, they should be approved as final regulatory Amendments, which shall go into effect ten (10) days after publication in the next available issue of the *Delaware Register of Regulations*;
9. The Department has an adequate Record of its decision, and no further public hearing is appropriate or necessary;
10. The Department shall submit this Order approving the proposed Amendments as final Amendments to the *Delaware Register of Regulations* for publication in its next available issue, and shall provide such other notice as the law and regulation require, as the Department determines is appropriate; and
11. The Department shall serve and publish its Order on its internet site.

Gregory Patterson
Secretary

3900 Wildlife

1.0 Definitions

For purposes of Regulations 1.0 through 24.0, the following words and phrases shall have the meaning ascribed to them:

"Administered by the Division" means owned, leased or licensed by the Division.

"Antlered deer" means any deer with ~~one~~^{one} ~~three~~^{one} or more antlers ~~three~~^{three} inches long or longer, measured from the base of the antler where it joins the skull to the tip of the antler following any curve of the antler.

"Antlerless deer" means any deer that has no antlers or antlers less than ~~three~~^{three} inches in length.

"Auxiliary marker" means any marker that is used to identify a released gamebird and is authorized by the Division which is limited to nasal discs and saddles, patagial markers, seamless leg bands, metal butt-end leg bands, plastic or metal leg bands that have a locking clasp, or plastic bandettes.

"Bait" means any nontoxic food material, compound or mixture of ingredients which wildlife is able to consume.

“Baited field” includes any farm field, woodland, marsh, water body or other tract of land where minerals, grain, fruit, crop or other nontoxic compounds have been placed to attract wildlife to be hunted. A baited field is considered baited for 10 days following complete removal of all bait.

“Black powder” means a manufacturer’s approved muzzleloading propellant.

“Cable restraint” formerly referred to as **“snare”**, is considered a trapping device made of stranded steel cable with a minimum diameter of 5/64 inches. Cable restraints must be equipped with a relaxing-type lock. The cable may not exceed 7 feet in length from the anchor point to the relaxing lock and must be equipped with at least one swivel device, which allows for 360° rotation, between the loop and the anchor. The cable restraint must have stops affixed to the cable to ensure that the cable that makes up the loop may not have a circumference greater than 38 inches when fully open, or a circumference less than 6 ¼ inches when fully closed. Cable restraints with a maximum loop circumference of 12 ½ inches do not require cable stops. Cable restraints must be maintained in good condition so that all components operate properly.

“Deer” means white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) or Sika deer (*Cervus nippon*).

“Direct supervision” refers to the parameters required when a hunter may not lawfully hunt alone. A person will be considered directly supervised while hunting if a person 21 years of age or older is always within 30 yards and in direct line of sight of the supervised person. The supervising person must be lawfully allowed to hunt in Delaware.

“Director” means the Director or Acting Director of the Division.

“Division” means the Division of Fish and Wildlife of the Department.

“Established blind” means a structure or pit constructed for the purpose of hunting migratory waterfowl by a landowner on the landowner’s property or by another person with the permission of the landowner or the landowner’s duly authorized agent.

“Established and maintained road” means a road maintained for vehicular use by the Division and designated for such use by the Division on current wildlife area maps.

“Foothold trap” formerly referred to as **“leghold trap”**, refers to a type of trap with a mechanism that is designed to catch and hold a mammal by one of its feet or legs.

“Furbearers” includes beavers, coyotes, gray fox, mink, muskrats, nutria, opossums, otters, raccoons, red fox, skunks and weasels.

“Jaw spread” means the distance between the inside of both jaws, when measured across the trap jaws on a line perpendicular to a line drawn through the jaw pivot points when the trap is in the set position.

“Liberated game” means cottontail rabbits and game birds, including bobwhite quail, mallard duck, chukar partridge, Hungarian partridge, and pheasant released pursuant to [7 Del.C. §568](#).

“Longbow” means a straight limb, reflex, recurve or compound bow. All crossbows or variations thereof and mechanical holding and releasing devices are expressly excluded from the definition.

“Lure” means any mixture of ingredients, element or compound that attract wildlife, but the wildlife is unlikely to consume.

“Pen-raised released quail” means northern bobwhite quail that have been hatched and raised in captivity and released into the wild.

“Possession” means either actual or constructive possession of or any control over the object referred to.

“Quality buck” means an antlered deer with an outside antler spread of at least 15 inches. This measurement is taken across the outside of the main beams at their widest point; this measurement’s path must be perpendicular to the center line of the skull and parallel to the top of the skull plate.

“Refuge” means an area of land, whether in public or private ownership, designated by the Department as a refuge. Land shall only be designated with the permission of the landowner and if such designation is thought to be in the best interest of the conservation of wildlife. Refuges shall normally be closed at all times to all forms of hunting, except as permitted by the Director in writing for wildlife management purposes.

“Relaxing lock” means a device installed on a cable restraint that allows the loop to release constriction pressure on the captured animal when the cable is not taut and the animal stops pulling.

“Roadway” means any road, lane or street, including associated right-of-ways, maintained by this State or any political subdivision of this State.

“Season” means that period of time during which a designated species of wildlife may be lawfully hunted or a designated species of fish may be lawfully fished.

“Vehicle” means any means in or by which someone travels or something is carried or conveyed or a means of conveyance or transport, whether or not propelled by its own power.

“Waterline” refers to beneath the surface of the water or below the mean high tide line in an area ordinarily subject to the rise and fall of the tide.

“Wildlife” means any member of the animal kingdom, including without limitation, any amphibian, arthropod, bird, mammal or reptile.

3 DE Reg. 289 (08/01/99)

3 DE Reg. 1738 (06/01/00)

11 DE Reg. 334 (09/01/07)

14 DE Reg. 52 (07/01/10)

15 DE Reg. 1505 (04/01/12)

17 DE Reg. 746 (01/01/14)

2.0 Method of Take

(Penalty Section 7 Del.C. §103(d))

- 2.1 General. Unless otherwise provided by law or regulation of the Department, it shall be unlawful to hunt any protected wildlife with any weapon or firearm other than a longbow, crossbow, or shotgun (10 gauge or smaller), except that:
 - 2.1.1 Crossbows may be used during all deer seasons;
 - 2.1.2 A muzzle-loading rifle with a barrel length of at least ~~twenty~~ 20 inches and loaded with black powder may be used to hunt deer during muzzleloader and shotgun deer seasons as described in subsections 7.5.1 and 7.5.3 of this regulation;
 - 2.1.3 A .17 through .22 caliber rimfire firearm or muzzleloading rifle not larger than .36 caliber may be used to hunt raccoons and opossums and to take wildlife lawfully confined in a trap;
 - 2.1.4 Collection by hand or using a hook, spear or gig may be used to take bullfrogs and green frogs; and
 - 2.1.5 Snapping turtles may be taken by hand or by using a spear, gig, fyke net or turtle trap. Turtle traps can have only ~~one~~ 1 throat or funneling device.
 - 2.1.6 A single shot falling-block, breech-loading antique or authentic reproduction black powder Sharps rifle of .45 to .60 caliber shall be lawful for use during shotgun deer seasons using paper patched cartridges.
 - 2.1.7 No person shall place in the field any set or unset equipment associated with the trapping of game animals until the opening day of any state approved trapping season.
 - 2.1.8 Any person who sets or makes use of any trap, cable restraint or other approved wildlife capture device during any lawful trapping season, shall remove all trapping equipment by the last day of the approved trapping season.
 - 2.1.9 It shall be unlawful to set a trap on public or private property without first acquiring written permission from the landowner or managing agency and having said permission in possession while tending traps.
 - 2.1.10 It shall be unlawful to bait a trap with meat or animal products, except box/cage traps, if the bait is visible from above and within 10 feet of the trap. The use of animal fur or feathers without any attached animal tissue is not restricted.
 - 2.1.11 Without first acquiring specific advance permission, it shall be unlawful for any person other than the rightful owner of a trap, to move, take, or damage any trap, or take, or attempt to take, wildlife from any trap.
- 2.2 Archery and Crossbow
 - 2.2.1 General. No person shall use or have in the person's possession, while hunting, any: poison arrow, arrow with and explosive tip, or any longbow with a minimum pull less than 30 pounds.
 - 2.2.2 Crossbows used for deer hunting must have a minimum pull weight of 125 pounds and have a mechanical safety. Crossbows may be equipped with a scope.
 - ~~2.2.2.1~~ It shall be unlawful to transport a crossbow on or within any vehicle while the crossbow is in the cocked position.
- 2.3 Hunting from Boats
 - 2.3.1 Distance from Blinds. During the season for the hunting of migratory waterfowl, it shall be unlawful for any person to hunt from a boat of any kind that is within 1500 feet of an established blind, except that:
 - 2.3.1.1 Any person may use a boat to tend lawfully set traps for fur-bearing wildlife;
 - 2.3.1.2 Any person may retrieve crippled waterfowl by the use of a boat in accordance with federal regulations;
 - 2.3.1.3 Any person may use a boat for transportation to and from an established blind lawfully used by such person;
 - 2.3.1.4 Any person may hunt from a boat that is firmly secured and enclosed in an established blind.
 - 2.3.2 Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection 2.2.1 of this section, any person may hunt migratory waterfowl within 1500 feet of an established blind, from a boat, with permission of the blind owner.
 - 2.3.3 Gunning Rigs
 - 2.3.3.1 During the season for hunting migratory waterfowl, it shall be unlawful for any person to hunt within 900 feet of the shoreline (high tide line) of the Delaware River and Bay, between the Appoquinimink River and the Smyrna River, without written permission of the closest adjoining landowners.
 - 2.3.3.2 During the season for hunting migratory waterfowl, it shall be unlawful for any person to hunt within 1500 feet of the shoreline (high tide line) of the Delaware River and Bay, between the Smyrna River and the Murderkill River, without written permission of the closest adjoining ~~landowner(s)~~ landowner.
 - 2.3.4 Tender Boats. It shall be unlawful for tender boats servicing gunning (layout) rigs to be further than 1500 feet from the rig or to conduct any activity, except to pick up downed birds or service the rig.
 - 2.3.5 During the season for hunting migratory waterfowl, it shall be unlawful for any person to hunt from a boat, or a floating or fixed blind in the Little River in areas bounded on both sides by land administered by the Division.
- 2.4 Foothold Traps

- 2.4.1 Notwithstanding [7 Del.C. §§703 and 788](#), it shall be unlawful for any person to set a foothold trap at any time in this State, except from November 1 through March 20. The use of toothed or serrated jawed traps is prohibited. All foothold traps set above the waterline must have padded jaws, offset jaws, or a minimum jaw thickness of 5/16 inch, as measured perpendicular across the face of the jaw where the 2 jaws meet when closed, with the exception being that coil-spring traps with a jaw spread of 4 inches or less and long-spring traps with a jaw spread of 4 ½ inches or less do not need to have padded or offset jaws, but must have a minimum jaw thickness of 1/8 inch as measured perpendicular across the face of the jaw where the 2 jaws meet when closed.
- 2.4.2 It shall be unlawful for any person to set foothold traps with a jaw spread larger than 6 ½ inches above the waterline. The jaw spread of traps set below the waterline shall not exceed 7 ¾ inches.
- 2.4.3 It shall be unlawful for any person to set or make use of any foothold, except coil-spring traps with a jaw spread of 4 inches or less and long-spring traps with a jaw spread of 4 ½ inches or less, without first permanently attaching a metallic tag on each trap, bearing:
 - 2.4.3.1 The words "Trapping License, Delaware", the number of the trapping license issued to the owner of the traps and the year of issuance; or
 - 2.4.3.2 The owner's name and address.
- 2.4.4 When information is furnished to the Division from the owner, tenant or sharecropper of any land that any species of wildlife is detrimental to crops, property or other interests on land on which the owner, tenant or sharecropper resides or controls, upon investigation, the Division may issue a permit to that person or the person's agent for the use of foothold traps to control that species of wildlife. The permit may be issued at any time of the year.
- 2.4.5 The setting of each trap in violation of this section shall be a separate offense.
- 2.4.6 Foot encapsulating traps shall be considered foothold traps.
- 2.5 Gray Squirrel. Hunting gray squirrels with a .17 through .22 caliber rimfire firearm, a pellet gun not larger than .177 caliber, or muzzle-loading rifle not larger than .36 caliber is permitted south of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal.
- 2.6 Muskrats. It shall be unlawful for any person to shoot muskrats at any time, except with written permission of the Director.
- 2.7 Otters. Each otter trapped in Delaware must be tagged by an authorized representative of the Division. Each otter sold in Delaware or shipped out of the State must be tagged in accordance with the requirements of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.
- 2.8 Red Fox
 - 2.8.1 Red foxes may be killed or trapped in accordance with [7 Del.C. §788](#) and the regulations found within this Section with the following: longbow and crossbow, shotgun, rimfire rifle or centerfire rifle up to .25 caliber, or a muzzle-loading rifle, foothold trap, cable restraint, or box trap.
 - 2.8.2 Notwithstanding subsection 2.8.1 of this section, during any deer firearms season, it shall be unlawful to hunt red fox with any firearm that is not also legal for deer hunting.
 - 2.8.3 Notwithstanding subsection 2.8.1 of this section, it shall be unlawful to kill a red fox that is being pursued by dogs.
- 2.9 Snapping Turtles
 - 2.9.1 Turtle traps must have either an escape hole below water measuring a minimum of 7 ½ inches in all directions or floats inserted inside the trap or attached to the trap or be set in such a way so that the trap provides sufficient breathing space for all captured turtles at all times.
 - 2.9.2 Each trap shall be marked with a metallic tag bearing the trapper's name and address or current year's trapping license number. The tag shall be attached to the trap in a manner that allows it to remain visible, at all times.
 - 2.9.3 All turtle traps must be lifted and emptied of catch at least once every 24 hours.
 - 2.9.4 An annual permit must be obtained from the Division in order to trap snapping turtles. This permit is free.
 - 2.9.5 Each person that obtains a permit to trap snapping turtles shall file a complete and accurate report with the Division on forms provided by the Division on all snapping turtles trapped during said season. Each report shall be filed with the Division by July 30, annually. Failure to file a complete and accurate report may disqualify the trapper from obtaining a snapping turtle permit in the future.
- 2.10 Cable Restraints
 - 2.10.1 It shall be unlawful for any person to set or make use of any cable restraint without first permanently attaching a metallic tag on each cable restraint, bearing:
 - 2.10.1.1 The words "Trapping License, Delaware", the number of the trapping license issued to the owner of the traps and the year of issuance; or
 - 2.10.1.2 The owner's name and address.
 - 2.10.2 It shall be unlawful to set a cable restraint with the bottom of the loop any higher than 12 inches above the ground.
- 2.11 ~~Box/Cage Traps~~ Traps
 - 2.11.1 It shall be unlawful for any person to set or make use of any box/cage trap without first permanently attaching a metallic tag on each trap, bearing:

~~2.11.1.12.11.1~~ The words "Trapping License, Delaware", the number of the trapping license issued to the owner of the traps and the year of issuance; or

~~2.11.1.22.11.2~~ The owner's name and address.

2.12 Muzzleloading Rifles and Pistols

2.12.1 No person shall have a loaded muzzleloading rifle or pistol in that person's possession in, against or on any automobile, other vehicle, any piece of farm machinery, motorboat while under power, or sailboat while under power.

2.12.2 ~~Notwithstanding~~ Notwithstanding subsection 2.12.1, a muzzleloading rifle or pistol shall be considered unloaded if there is not powder and ball, bullet or shot loaded in the bore. If there is powder and ball, bullet, or shot loaded in the bore, a muzzleloading rifle or pistol shall not be considered loaded if the cap, primer, or priming powder (in a flintlock) is removed.

2.13 When it is lawful to hunt or trap furbearers, lure may be used.

3 DE Reg. 289 (08/01/99)

6 DE Reg. 536 (10/01/02)

11 DE Reg. 334 (09/01/07)

14 DE Reg. 52 (07/01/10)

15 DE Reg. 1505 (04/01/12)

17 DE Reg. 238 (08/01/13)

17 DE Reg. 746 (01/01/14)

27 DE Reg. 874 (05/01/24)

3.0 Federal Laws and Regulations Adopted

(Penalty Section [7 Del.C. §103\(d\)](#))

3.1 Federal Laws. It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt, buy, sell or possess any protected wildlife or part thereof, except in such manner and numbers as may be prescribed by the following federal laws and regulations promulgated thereunder: Airborne Hunting Act (16 USC § 742j-l et seq.), Eagle Act (16 USC § 668 et seq.), Endangered Species Act (16 USC 1531 et seq.), Lacey Act (16 USC § 3371 et seq.), Marine Mammal Protection Act (16 USC § 1361 et seq.), and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 USC § 703 et seq.). Notwithstanding the foregoing, the federal laws and regulations shall be superseded by more stringent restrictions prescribed by State law or regulation of the Department.

3.2 Sea Ducks. Scoters, ~~eiders~~-eiders, and long-tailed ducks may be taken during their special season not less than 800 yards seaward from the Delaware Bay shore beginning at an east/west line between Port Mahon and the Elbow Cross Navigation Light south to the Atlantic Ocean or in the Atlantic Ocean.

3.3 Non-toxic Shot

3.3.1 Required Usage. Non-toxic shot, as defined by federal regulations, shall be required for hunting waterfowl, rails, snipe, and moorhens in Delaware. It shall be unlawful for any person to possess shells loaded with lead shot while hunting waterfowl, rails, snipe, and moorhens.

3.3.2 Maximum Shot Size. It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt, except for deer, in Delaware with any size non-toxic shot (as defined by federal regulations) pellets larger than size T (.20 inches in diameter).

3.4 Special Mallard Release Areas. The Division may issue permits to allow the taking of captive-reared mallards during the established waterfowl season under applicable federal regulations. Permits shall only be issued to persons who: control at least 100 acres of land on which there is suitable waterfowl habitat; agree to follow a management plan and federal regulations; and maintain a log of guests and birds harvested. Failure to follow the management plan or a violation of State or federal laws may result in the revocation of a Special Mallard Release Area Permit. Waterfowl may only be hunted on Special Mallard Release Areas from ~~one-half~~ 1/2 hour after sunrise to ~~one~~ 1 hour before sunset.

3.5 Mute Swans (*Cygnus olor*)

3.5.1 Mute swans shall be considered an exotic, invasive species that are not subject to state protection. Mute swans may only be taken during legal waterfowl hunting seasons and shooting hours. The method of take for mute swans is restricted to shotguns no larger than 10 gauge and with non-toxic ammunition no larger than size T.

3.5.2 It shall be unlawful to possess, buy, sell, barter, trade, or transfer any live mute swan or their eggs to or from another person unless permitted by the Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife.

3.5.3 It shall be unlawful to release any mute swan into the wild.

3.6 Special Shotgun Season for Young Hunters. Waterfowl may be hunted on special days established annually by the Division for hunters ~~40 years of age or older~~ but less than 16 years of age (~~10-15 years inclusive~~). Hunters 13-15 years of age must have completed an approved course in hunter training and possess a Delaware Resident or Non-Resident Junior Hunting License. Young hunters must be accompanied by a licensed non-hunting adult who is 21 years of age or older. Young hunters must be of sufficient size, physical ~~strength~~-strength, and emotional maturity to safely handle a shotgun.

3 DE Reg. 289 (08/01/99)

6 DE Reg. 536 (10/01/02)

12 DE Reg. 496 (10/01/08)

14 DE Reg. 52 (07/01/10)

4.0 Seasons

(Penalty Section 7 [Del.C. §103\(d\)](#))

- 4.1 Season Dates. Hunting and trapping season dates will be published each year in an annual publication entitled "Delaware Hunting and Trapping Guide."
- 4.2 General. It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt those species of wildlife for which a season is designated at any time other than during that season.
- 4.3 Protected Wildlife
- 4.3.1 Unless otherwise provided by law or regulation of the Department, it shall be unlawful for any person to hunt any species of protected wildlife.
- 4.3.2 It shall be unlawful for any person to sell, transport or possess any species of protected wildlife, except when:
- 4.3.2.1 Otherwise provided by law or regulation of the Department; or
- 4.3.2.2 The wildlife was lawfully taken outside of this State in accordance with the laws or regulations of the state or nation where the wildlife was taken.
- 4.4 Beaver
- 4.4.1 Season. Beavers may be hunted or trapped in accordance with the statutes and regulations of the State of Delaware governing the harvest of beavers from December 1 through March 20.
- 4.4.2 Beaver hides and the meat of lawfully taken beaver harvested anywhere within or outside of Delaware may be sold.
- 4.5 Bullfrogs and Green Frogs
- 4.5.1 Season. Bullfrogs and green frogs may be hunted in accordance with the statutes and regulations of the State of Delaware governing the hunting of bullfrogs and green frogs: from May 1 through September 30.
- 4.5.2 Limit. It shall be unlawful for any person to take more than 24 bullfrogs or green frogs, in aggregate, in any 1 day.
- 4.5.3 License. A hunting or fishing license is required to take bullfrogs or green frogs.
- 4.6 Crows. It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt crows during any period of the year, except ~~Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays~~ Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays between and including the fourth ~~Thursday~~Friday of June and the last ~~Saturday~~Sunday of March. The hunting of crows is restricted by the provisions of federal regulations pertaining to the taking of crows.
- 4.7 Gray Squirrel
- 4.7.1 Season. Gray squirrel may be hunted in accordance with the statutes and regulations of the State of Delaware governing the hunting of gray squirrel: from September 15 through the last day of February. Squirrel hunting shall be unlawful during the November deer firearms season as described in subsection 7.5.1.1 of this regulation. When squirrel season overlaps with a deer season as described in subsections 7.5.1 and 7.5.3 of this regulation, and [7 Del.C. §704](#), squirrels may be hunted when hunter orange is displayed in accordance with [7 Del.C. §718](#).
- 4.7.2 Limit. It shall be unlawful for any person to take more than 6 gray squirrels in any 1 day.
- 4.8 Opossum. The opossum may only be hunted or trapped during the lawful season to hunt or trap raccoons.
- 4.9 Pheasant
- 4.9.1 Season. Male pheasant may be hunted in accordance with the statutes and regulations of the State of Delaware governing the hunting of pheasant: from the Monday that immediately precedes Thanksgiving through the last day of February, provided that during a deer firearms season hunter orange is displayed in accordance with [7 Del.C. §718](#).
- 4.9.2 Female Pheasant. It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt or possess any female pheasant at any time, except as permitted on game preserves, by licensed game breeders or as otherwise permitted by law.
- 4.9.3 Male Pheasant Limit. It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt or possess more than 2 male pheasants in any 1 day during the pheasant season, except as permitted by law.
- 4.9.4 Game Preserves. Nothing in this regulation shall be construed so as to limit the number or sex of pheasants that may be harvested by any ~~one~~1 person on licensed game preserves.
- 4.10 Quail
- 4.10.1 It shall be unlawful to harvest wild quail without a permit from the Division. Permits may be issued to landowners that have at least 40 acres of habitat suitable to support and sustain wild quail as determined and approved by the Division. The Division will reassess the closure of the statewide wild quail season every 3 years.
- 4.10.2 Pen-raised Released Quail Season. Pen-raised and released bobwhite quail may be hunted in accordance with the statutes and regulations of the State of Delaware governing the hunting of bobwhite quail: from the Monday that immediately precedes Thanksgiving through the last day of February, provided that during a deer firearms season hunter orange is displayed in accordance with [7 Del.C. §718](#).
- 4.11 Rabbit
- 4.11.1 Season. Rabbits may be hunted in accordance with the statutes and regulations of the State of Delaware governing the hunting of rabbits: from the Monday that immediately precedes Thanksgiving through the

last day of February provided that during a deer firearms season hunter orange is displayed in accordance with [7 Del.C. §718](#).

4.11.2 Limit. It shall be unlawful for any person to take more than 4 rabbits in any 1 day.

4.12 Raccoon

4.12.1 Trapping Season. Raccoon may be trapped in accordance with the statutes and regulations of the State of Delaware governing the trapping of raccoon: from December 1 through March 10 (March 20 on embanked meadows in New Castle County). The season is open throughout the year on private land, except on Sundays, in eastern New Castle and Kent counties pursuant to [7 Del.C. §786](#).

4.12.2 Hunting Season. Raccoon may be hunted in accordance with the statutes and regulations of the State of Delaware governing the hunting of raccoon: from August 1 through October 31 for chase only whereby it shall be unlawful to kill raccoon and opossum; from November 1 through the last day of February; and from March 1 through March 31 for chase only whereby it shall be unlawful to kill raccoon and opossum. The season is open throughout the year on private land in eastern New Castle and Kent counties, except on Sundays, pursuant to [7 Del.C. §786](#).

4.12.3 Notwithstanding subsection 4.12.2 of this section, it shall be unlawful for any person to hunt raccoon or opossum during any period with the aid of a dog when it is lawful to hunt deer with a firearm, except that it shall be lawful to hunt raccoon from 1 hour after sunset until midnight during the October, ~~December~~ December, and January Shotgun deer seasons as described in subsection 7.5.1 of this regulation, the January Handgun and Straight-walled Pistol Caliber Rifle deer season as described in [7 Del.C. §704](#), and the January Muzzleloader deer season as described in subsection 7.5.3 of this regulation.

4.13 Red Fox and ~~Gray Fox~~

4.13.1 Red Fox Hunting Harvest Season. Red fox may be killed in accordance with the statutes and regulations of the State of Delaware governing the hunting of red fox: from November 1 through the last day of February. Notwithstanding the foregoing, red foxes may be killed in accordance with subsection 2.8 of this regulation and [7 Del.C. §788](#).

4.13.2 Red Fox Trapping Season. Red fox may be trapped with foothold, cable restraint, or cage/box traps from November 1 through March 10.

~~4.13.3 Gray Fox Harvest Reporting. All gray fox taken, killed or captured pursuant to [7 Del.C. §796](#) must be reported to the Division of Fish and Wildlife within 7 calendar days using its established reporting system.~~

4.14 Ruffed Grouse. It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt for ruffed grouse during any period of the year.

4.15 Snapping Turtles

4.15.1 Season. It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt for snapping turtles during any period of the year, except between and including June 15 and May 15.

4.15.2 Size. It shall be unlawful for any person to sell, offer for sale or kill any snapping turtle with a straight-line carapace (top shell) length of less than ~~eleven~~ 11 inches, measured on the curvature. This straight-line measurement is taken from the nuchal scute directly behind the turtle's head to the base of the notch where the ~~two~~ 2 most posterior scutes meet over the tail.

4.16 Terrapin. Season. It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt or trap for diamondback terrapin during any period of the year.

4.17 Muskrats

4.17.1 7 Day Season Extension. The Department may extend the muskrat trapping season 7 days if the Department determines that the statewide muskrat population can sustain additional harvest and the average mean temperature for February was below ~~30°F~~ 30°F or the total February snowfall exceeded 20 inches as determined by the National Weather Service station at Wilmington, Delaware.

4.17.2 14 Day Season Extension. The Department may extend the muskrat trapping season 14 days if the Department determines that the statewide muskrat population can sustain additional harvest and the average mean temperature for February was below 28°F or the total February snowfall exceeded 32 inches as determined by the National Weather Service station at Wilmington, Delaware.

4.18 Mink. Mink may only be trapped during the lawful season to trap muskrats.

4.19 Otter. Otters may only be trapped during the lawful season to trap muskrats.

4.20 Chukar and Hungarian Partridge. Chukars and Hungarian Partridge may be hunted during the lawful season to hunt pheasants.

3 DE Reg. 289 (08/01/99)

3 DE Reg. 1738 (06/01/00)

6 DE Reg. 536 (10/01/02)

8 DE Reg. 352 (08/01/04)

11 DE Reg. 334 (09/01/07)

13 DE Reg. 941 (01/01/10)

14 DE Reg. 52 (07/01/10)

15 DE Reg. 1505 (04/01/12)

17 DE Reg. 746 (01/01/14)

19 DE Reg. 927 (04/01/16)

27 DE Reg. 874 (05/01/24)

5.0 Wild Turkeys

(Penalty Section 7 Del.C. §103(d))

5.1 Possession of Live Wild Turkeys

- 5.1.1 It shall be unlawful for any person, other than authorized representatives of the Division, to possess live wild turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*) in Delaware without the birds being confined at all times.
- 5.1.2 If wild turkeys kept in captivity escape and cannot be recaptured within 72 hours the Division must be contacted.
- 5.1.3 It shall be unlawful to collect or possess any live wild turkey or their eggs from the wild.

5.2 Instruction Requirement

- 5.2.1 It shall be unlawful for any person 13 years of age or older to hunt wild turkeys in Delaware before passing a Division approved course of instruction in turkey hunting, which includes Division approved internet courses. Persons 13 years of age or older must have proof of course completion in their possession while turkey hunting.
- 5.2.2 Youth hunters under the age of 13 must be accompanied by an adult 21 years of age or older who has successfully completed a Division approved course of instruction in turkey hunting. The adult must have a valid hunting license or license exempt number (LEN).

5.3 Method of Take

- 5.3.1 It shall be unlawful for any person to use any firearm to hunt wild turkeys, except a 10, 12, 16, or 20, 28, or .410 gauge shotgun loaded with shot no larger than size 4 or a longbow, compound bow or crossbow with a broadhead arrow, 7/8 inches in minimum width.
- 5.3.2 It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt wild turkeys on or over a baited field or with dogs.
- 5.3.3 It shall be unlawful for any person to "drive" wild turkeys.
- 5.3.4 It shall be unlawful for any person to shoot any wild turkey that is in a roost tree.
- 5.3.5 It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt wild turkeys if ~~said~~the person is wearing any garment with the external colors white, red, or blue.
- 5.3.6 It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt wild turkeys and use artificial turkey decoys of either sex that are wholly or partially made from any part of a turkey that was formerly alive.
- 5.3.7 It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt wild turkeys using an electronic calling device.

5.4 Season, Registration, and Limit

- 5.4.1 Turkeys may be hunted in accordance with the statutes and regulations of the State of Delaware governing the hunting of turkeys: from the second Saturday in April through the ~~fourth Saturday~~fifth Sunday succeeding ~~said~~the opening Saturday. It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt wild turkeys on publicly-owned lands without the written authorization of the land-managing agency, except when hunting during the Special Season for Young and Disabled Hunters as described in subsection 5.5 of this section.
- 5.4.2 It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt wild turkeys, except from ½ hour before sunrise to 1:00 p.m.
- 5.4.3 It shall be unlawful for any person to not ~~check a wild turkey at an authorized checking station by 2:30 p.m. on the day of kill or~~ register their turkey within 24 hours of killing ~~said~~the turkey by phone or over the internet through systems authorized by the Division. Turkeys taken to a processor, ~~taxidermist~~taxidermist, or given to another person must be registered before the animal is transferred. After registering a turkey, hunters will be given a turkey registration number. This number must be recorded in ink on the approved Turkey Harvest Report Card listed in subsection 5.4.5 of this section. It shall be unlawful to knowingly enter incorrect information when registering a turkey.
- 5.4.4 Retention of Turkey Registration Number. If a harvested turkey is no longer in a hunter's possession, a self-produced or Division issued possession tag shall remain affixed to the turkey bearing either the turkey registration number if the turkey has been registered or the hunter's hunting license or License Exempt Number and the harvest date if the turkey has not been registered. The turkey registration number shall be recorded on the possession tag once it has been registered.
- 5.4.5 ~~Upon implementation of the phone or internet reporting system as described in subsection 5.4.3, each~~ Each person who hunts and kills a turkey shall, immediately after the killing and before removing the turkey from the location of the killing, punch/cut the appropriate portion of their approved Turkey Harvest Report ~~Card~~Card, and record in ink the date of harvest on the Turkey Harvest Report Card. Turkey Harvest Report Cards shall remain in a hunter's possession at all times while hunting turkeys.
- 5.4.6 It shall be unlawful for any person to take or attempt to take a turkey without a beard. It shall be unlawful for any person to take or attempt to take more than ~~one~~1 bearded wild turkey per season.

- 5.5 Special Season for Young and Disabled Hunters. Turkeys may be hunted on private land and selected public land on the Saturday and Sunday prior to the opening of the regular spring turkey hunting season by disabled (non-ambulatory) hunters using a wheelchair for mobility, and hunters ~~40 years of age or older but less than 16 years of age (40-15 years inclusive)~~. Hunters 13-15 years of age must have completed an approved course in hunter training as well as a Division approved turkey hunter safety class and possess a Delaware Resident or Non-Resident Junior Hunting License. Young hunters must be accompanied by a licensed non-hunting adult who is 21 years of age or older who has also completed a Delaware approved turkey hunter safety class. Young hunters must be of sufficient size, physical strength and emotional maturity to safely handle a firearm.

11 DE Reg. 334 (09/01/07)
12 DE Reg. 496 (10/01/08)
15 DE Reg. 1505 (04/01/12)
17 DE Reg. 238 (08/01/13)

6.0 Game Preserves

(Penalty Section 7 Del.C. §103(d))

It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt liberated game on licensed game preserves from April 1 through October 14.

3 DE Reg. 289 (08/01/99)

3 DE Reg. 1738 (06/01/00)

7.0 Deer

(Penalty Section 7 Del.C. §103(d))

7.1 Limit

7.1.1 Unless otherwise provided by law or regulation of the Department, it shall be unlawful for any person to:

- 7.1.1.1 Kill or take or attempt to kill or take more than ~~four~~ 4 antlerless deer in any license year;
- 7.1.1.2 Possess or transport an antlered deer that was unlawfully killed.
- 7.1.1.3 Possess or transport an antlerless deer that was unlawfully killed.
- 7.1.1.4 Kill any antlered deer without first purchasing a Delaware Resident Combination Hunter's Choice Deer tag and Quality Buck Deer Tag, a Delaware Nonresident Antlered Deer Tag, or a Nonresident Quality Buck Deer Tag except that, residents and nonresidents, exempt from purchasing a hunting license shall be entitled to 1 Hunter's Choice Deer Tag or 1 Nonresident Antlered Deer Tag, respectively, at no cost.

7.1.1.5 No hunter may harvest more than 2 antlered deer during a license year between July 4th-1 and June 30th 30 of the next calendar year.

7.1.2 For the purposes of this section, a person "driving deer" and not in possession of any weapon or firearm shall not be treated as if they are hunting deer, provided they are assisting lawful hunters.

7.1.3 It shall be unlawful for any person to purchase, sell, expose for sale, transport or possess with the intent to sell, any deer or any part of such deer at any time, except that hides from deer lawfully killed and checked may be sold. This subsection shall not apply to venison approved for sale by the United States Department of Agriculture and imported into Delaware.

7.1.4 Notwithstanding subsection 7.1.1 of this section, a person may purchase Antlerless Deer Tags to kill or take additional antlerless deer during the open season. Hunters may take additional antlerless deer on Antlerless Deer Damage Tags at no cost.

7.1.5 Notwithstanding subsection 7.1.1 of this section, a person may use 1 Quality Buck tag to take an antlered deer with a minimum outside antler spread of 15 inches, provided the tag is valid for the season in which it is used. Hunters exempt from the requirement to purchase a hunting license must purchase a Quality Buck tag in order to take a second antlered deer in any 1 license year.

7.2 Tagging, Deer Harvest Report Cards, and Registering Harvested Deer

7.2.1 Attaching Tags and Punching Deer Harvest Report Cards. Each licensed person who hunts and kills a deer shall, immediately after killing and before removing the deer from the location of the killing, punch/cut the appropriate portion of their approved Deer Harvest Report Card and record in ink the date of harvest on the Deer Harvest Report Card. An approved tag on a Deer Harvest Report Card shall mean an Antlerless Deer Tag received with the hunting license, a Delaware Resident Quality Buck Deer Tag, a Delaware Resident Hunter's Choice Deer Tag, a Delaware Nonresident Quality Buck Deer Tag, a Delaware Nonresident Antlered Deer Tag, an Antlerless Deer Damage Tag, or an Antlerless Tag purchased in addition to the hunting license tags. Any unlicensed person not required to secure a license shall punch/cut the appropriate portion of their Deer Harvest Report Card. Deer Harvest Report Cards shall remain in a hunter's possession at all times while hunting deer.

7.2.2 Retention of Tag and Deer Registration Number. If a harvested deer is no longer in a hunter's possession, a self-produced or Division issued possession tag shall remain affixed to the deer bearing either the deer registration number if the deer has been registered or the hunter's hunting license or License Exempt Number and the harvest date if the deer has not been registered. The deer registration number shall be recorded on the possession tag once it has been registered.

7.2.3 Registering Deer. Each person who hunts and kills a deer shall, within 24 hours of killing said deer, register their deer by phone or over the internet through systems authorized by the Division. Deer taken to a processor, taxidermist, or given to another person must be registered before the animal is transferred. After registering a deer, hunters will be given a deer registration number. This number must be recorded in ink on the approved tags or the hunter's approved Deer Harvest Report Card listed in subsection 7.2.1 of this section. It shall be unlawful to knowingly enter incorrect information when registering a deer.

- 7.2.4 Dressing. It shall be unlawful for any person to remove from any deer any part thereof, except those internal organs known as the viscera, or cut the meat thereof into parts, until such deer has been registered using the phone or internet system authorized by the Division.
- 7.2.5 Deer Registration Number. The Deer Registration number provided by the automated phone/internet system must remain with the head ~~and/or~~ and carcass until the mount is picked up from the taxidermist or the meat is processed and stored as food.
- 7.3 Method of Take
- 7.3.1 Shotgun. It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt deer during the shotgun season using a shotgun of a caliber smaller than 20 gauge or have in the person's possession any shell loaded with shot smaller than what is commonly known as "buckshot."
- 7.3.2 Archery and Crossbow Seasons. It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt deer during the archery season or crossbow season and have in the person's possession any weapon or firearm other than a ~~knife~~, a longbow or crossbow and sharpened broadhead arrows having minimum arrowhead width of 7/8 of an inch.
- 7.3.3 Muzzle-loading Pistols. A single shot muzzle-loading pistol of .42 caliber or larger using a minimum powder charge of 40 grains may be used to provide the coupe-de-grace on deer during the deer season described within subsection 7.5.3 of this regulation.
- 7.3.4 Refuge in Water. It shall be unlawful for any person to shoot, kill or wound or attempt to shoot, kill or wound any deer that is taking refuge in or swimming through the waters of any stream, pond, lake or tidal waters.
- 7.4 Illegal Hunting Methods; Baiting. It shall be unlawful for any person to set, lay or use any trap, snare, net, or pitfall or make use of any artificial light, or other contrivance or device, for the purpose of hunting deer. This subsection does not preclude the use of bait for the purpose of attracting deer in order to hunt them on private land.
- 7.5 Seasons
- 7.5.1 Shotgun Seasons
- 7.5.1.1 Either Sex Seasons. From the Friday in November that precedes Thanksgiving by 13 days through the second Sunday succeeding ~~said this~~ Friday; and from the Saturday that precedes the third Monday in January through the subsequent second Sunday in January.
- 7.5.1.2 Antlerless Seasons. Antlerless deer may be hunted in accordance with the statutes and regulations of the State of Delaware governing the hunting of deer during all Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays in October except during the October Muzzleloader season and from the second Saturday in December through the third Sunday in December. Notwithstanding the foregoing, antlered deer may be taken with a longbow or crossbow that is legal during these antlerless seasons.
- 7.5.1.3 Special Season for Young and Disabled Hunters. Deer of either sex may be hunted on the last Saturday and Sunday of September and the first Saturday and Sunday of November by disabled (non-ambulatory) hunters using a wheelchair for ~~mobility, mobility~~ and hunters ~~10 years of age or older but less than 16 years of age (10 to 15 inclusive)~~. Hunters 13-15 years of age must have completed an approved course in hunter training and possess a Delaware Resident or Non-Resident Junior Hunting License. Young hunters must be accompanied by a licensed non-hunting adult who is 21 years of age or older. Young hunters must be of sufficient size, physical ~~strength~~ strength, and emotional maturity to safely handle a firearm.
- 7.5.2 Archery Seasons. Deer may be hunted with longbow in accordance with statutes and regulations of the State of Delaware governing the hunting of deer: from September 1 through the last day of January or the last day of the muzzleloader season that starts in January as described in subsection 7.5.3 of this ~~subsection~~regulation, whichever is later, provided hunter orange is displayed in accordance with [7 Del.C. §718](#) when it also lawful to hunt deer with a firearm.
- 7.5.3 Muzzleloader Seasons. Deer may be hunted with muzzle-loading rifles in accordance with the statutes and regulations of the State of Delaware governing the hunting of deer: from the Friday that precedes the second Monday in October through the second Sunday that succeeds the Friday opening day; and from the Monday that follows the close of the January shotgun season through the next Sunday.
- 7.5.4 Crossbow Seasons. Deer may be hunted with crossbows in accordance with statutes and regulations of the State of Delaware governing the hunting of deer: from September 1 through the last day of January or the last day of the muzzleloader season that starts in January as described in subsection 7.5.3 of this ~~subsection~~regulation, whichever is later, provided hunter orange is displayed in accordance with [7 Del.C. §718](#) when it also lawful to hunt deer with a firearm.
- 7.6 Carcass Importation Ban
- 7.6.1 Importation. It shall be unlawful to import or possess any carcass or part of a carcass of any member of the family Cervidae (deer) originating from a state, Canadian province, country or any portion of the aforementioned jurisdictions thereof as determined by the Division, in which Chronic Wasting Disease has been found. It shall be unlawful to import any carcass or part of a carcass of any member of the family Cervidae from a captive facility including those where cervids were released or confined in an

enclosed (fenced) facility for the purpose of being hunted. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the following parts may be imported into the state:

- 7.6.1.1 Boned-out meat that is cut and wrapped;
 - 7.6.1.2 Quarters or other portions of meat with no part of the spinal column or skull attached;
 - 7.6.1.3 Hides or capes with no skull attached;
 - 7.6.1.4 Clean (no meat or tissue attached) skull plates with antlers attached;
 - 7.6.1.5 Antlers (with no meat or tissue attached);
 - 7.6.1.6 Upper canine teeth (buglers, whistlers, or ivories); and
 - 7.6.1.7 Finished taxidermy products.
- 7.6.2 Carcass Notification. Any person who imports into Delaware any deer carcass or parts described in subsection 7.6.1 of this section and is notified that the animal has tested positive for Chronic Wasting Disease must report the test results to the Division within 72 hours of receiving the notification. In order to facilitate the proper disposal of any infected material, the Division may take into possession any imported carcass or carcass part of an animal if the animal has tested positive for Chronic Wasting Disease.

3 DE Reg. 289 (08/01/99)

6 DE Reg. 536 (10/01/02)

8 DE Reg. 352 (08/01/04)

11 DE Reg. 334 (09/01/07)

12 DE Reg. 496 (10/01/08)

14 DE Reg. 52 (07/01/10)

15 DE Reg. 1505 (04/01/12)

17 DE Reg. 746 (01/01/14)

27 DE Reg. 874 (05/01/24)

8.0 General Rules and Regulations Governing Land and Waters Administered by the Division

8.1 Motorized Vehicles

- 8.1.1 General. It shall be unlawful for any person to drive or operate a motorized vehicle upon any lands administered by the Division, except on established and maintained roads or as otherwise authorized by the Director. Notwithstanding the forgoing, motorized electric carts, wagons, or wheelbarrows, may be used to transport hunting/fishing equipment or game/fish on lands administered by the Division, provided they are not ridden or used to transport any person. Anyone using such equipment must walk while using them.
- 8.1.2 Noise. It shall be unlawful for any person to drive or operate a motorized vehicle upon any lands administered by the Division, unless such vehicle is equipped with a muffler in good working order and in constant operation to prevent excessive or unusual noise.
- 8.1.3 Speed Limit. It shall be unlawful for any person to drive or operate a vehicle in excess of 20 miles per hour when on lands administered by the Division, unless otherwise authorized by the Director.
- 8.1.4 Unlicensed Vehicles. It shall be unlawful for any person to drive or operate any motorized vehicle upon any lands administered by the Division, unless said vehicle is licensed for use upon public highways and roadways or the driver or operator of said vehicle has been issued a permit from the Division.
- 8.1.5 Parking
 - 8.1.5.1 It shall be unlawful for any person to park any vehicle on lands administered by the Division in such a manner as to obstruct the use of a boat ramp, roadway or trail. Any vehicle parked in such manner shall be subject to removal, and the owner of said vehicle shall bear all costs involved with such removal.
 - 8.1.5.2 Unless otherwise authorized by the Director, it shall be unlawful for any person to park and leave unattended any vehicle or trailer in any Division parking lot, unless said lot is lawfully being used for direct access to lands or waters administered by the Division.
 - 8.1.5.3 Unless otherwise authorized by the Director, it shall be unlawful for any person to leave any vehicle on lands administered by the Division for a period exceeding 24 hours.
- 8.1.6 Speed Exhibition. No person shall accelerate or try to accelerate a vehicle at a rate which causes the drive wheels to spin or slip on the road surface on lands administered by the Division. This subsection shall not apply during periods of inclement weather.
- 8.1.7 Careless or Inattentive Driving
 - 8.1.7.1 Whoever operates a vehicle in a careless or imprudent manner, or without due regard for road, weather and traffic conditions then existing on lands administered by the Division, shall be guilty of careless driving.
 - 8.1.7.2 Whoever operates a vehicle and who fails to give full time and attention to the operation of the vehicle on lands administered by the Division, or whoever fails to maintain a proper lookout while operating the vehicle on lands administered by the Division, shall be guilty of inattentive driving.
- 8.1.8 Reckless Driving. No person shall drive any vehicle in willful or wanton disregard for the safety of persons or property on lands administered by the Division, and this offense shall be known as reckless driving.
- 8.1.9 It is unlawful to operate or possess radio-controlled drones, boats and other vehicles, or launch model rockets on lands or waters administered by the Division without a permit from the Director.

8.2 Conditions of Use

- 8.2.1 Trespass. It shall be unlawful for any person to enter upon lands or waters administered by the Division when those lands or waters have been closed by the Division to: protect public safety; protect Department property; or manage wildlife. Persons shall adhere to special entry restrictions as listed on official area maps signed by the Division Director.
- 8.2.2 Hours of Entry. It shall be unlawful for any person to be present upon lands or waters administered by the Division between ½ hour after sunset and ½ hour before sunrise, unless such person is lawfully hunting or fishing or has been authorized by written permission of the Director.
- 8.2.3 Camping. It shall be unlawful for any person to camp on lands administered by the Division, except conservation oriented groups may, with written permission of the Director, camp in areas specified in such permit.
- 8.2.4 Swimming. It shall be unlawful for any person to swim in waters administered by the Division, except by written permission of the Director.
- 8.2.5 Dumping
 - 8.2.5.1 It shall be unlawful for any person to place, dump, deposit, throw or leave any garbage, refuse or similar debris within or upon any lands or waters administered by the Division, except in receptacles provided for such purpose;
 - 8.2.5.2 It shall be unlawful for any person to bring any trash, refuse or similar material onto lands administered by the Division for the purpose of disposing such in Division receptacles.
 - 8.2.5.3 Unless otherwise authorized by the Director, it shall be unlawful for any person to deposit any material, structure, debris or other objects on lands or waters administered by the Division.
 - 8.2.5.4 It is unlawful for any person to release or otherwise introduce any species of domestic or wild animal onto lands administered by the Division, unless in accordance with the statutes or regulations of the State of Delaware governing dog training activities.
- 8.2.6 Destruction of State Property
 - 8.2.6.1 It shall be unlawful for any person to deface, damage, remove or alter any structures, buildings, natural-land features, or other property or equipment belonging to the Division.
 - 8.2.6.2 Unless authorized by the Division for management, research or educational purposes, it shall be unlawful for any person to cut, injure or remove trees, shrubs, wildflowers, ferns, mosses or other plants from lands administered by the Division.
 - 8.2.6.3 It shall be unlawful for any person to erect or use any portable or permanent deer stand that involves the use of nails or screws placed in a tree.
 - 8.2.6.4 Unless otherwise authorized by the Director, it shall be unlawful for any person to kindle, build, maintain or use a fire on lands administered by the Division.
 - 8.2.6.5 It is unlawful to use metal detectors on lands or waters administered by the Division without a permit from the Division Director.
- 8.2.7 Collection of Wildlife. Collection and removal of any wildlife species from a State Wildlife Area is prohibited unless otherwise provided by statute, regulation or authorized by the Division Director.
- 8.2.8 Fishing. It shall be unlawful to fish in any Division managed wildlife area pond from September 1 through January 31 and Monday through Saturday during the spring turkey season, except in accordance with conditions set forth on area maps or signs.
- 8.2.9 Area Access. It shall be unlawful for any person to utilize lands administered by the Division, except as permitted by the Director in writing and specified on current wildlife area maps distributed by the Division.

8.3 Hunting and Firearms

- 8.3.1 Hunting. A daily permit must be obtained before hunting waterfowl at Augustine, Cedar Swamp, Little Creek, Woodland Beach, Ted Harvey, Prime Hook and Assawoman wildlife areas. Permits may be obtained on-site from an authorized agent of the Division and must be returned upon leaving the area. The Director may specify the hours of a permit's effectiveness and determine the conditions of its issuance.
- 8.3.2 Waterfowl
 - 8.3.2.1 It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt waterfowl on areas administered by the Division, except from State built blinds, or other blinds authorized by the Division, or by written permission of the Director.
 - 8.3.2.2 It shall be unlawful for any person to enter tidal ~~and/or~~ or impounded areas administered by the Division during the waterfowl season, except while lawfully hunting or trapping.
- 8.3.3 Trapping. It shall be unlawful for any person to trap or attempt to trap on areas administered by the Division, except for: persons holding a valid permit with the Division to do so; authorized agents of the Division who are conducting authorized wildlife management practices; or scientific purposes as specifically authorized in writing by the Director.
- 8.3.4 Firearms on Division Areas
 - 8.3.4.1 It shall be unlawful for any person to possess a firearm within areas administered by the Division and designated in subsection 8.3.4.6 below ~~administered by the Division of this regulation~~, except as authorized by the Director in writing, or as set forth below.

- 8.3.4.2 It shall be unlawful for any person to possess a rifled firearm of any description at any time on those lands bordering the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal and licensed to the Department by the Government of the United States for wildlife management purposes, except that muzzleloaders and shotguns with rifled barrels may be used during deer seasons when it is lawful to use those firearms.
- 8.3.4.3 It shall be unlawful for any person to discharge any firearm on lands or waters administered by the Division on Sunday, except in areas designated by the Director or with a permit from the Director.
- 8.3.4.4 It shall be unlawful for any person to discharge any firearm on lands or waters administered by the Division for any purpose, including target shooting, other than to hunt during an open season, train dogs in designated areas, or under conditions approved by the Director and specified on the current wildlife area map.
- 8.3.4.5 It shall be unlawful to possess, consume or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages, liquors or drugs while hunting or in the possession of firearms when on lands administered by the Division.
- 8.3.4.6 Areas subject to the provisions of subsection 8.3.4.1 ~~above~~ shall include Division offices, visitor centers, nature centers, educational facilities, facilities or locations used for authorized special events or festivals, and maintenance shops, and shall be identified by appropriate signage.
- 8.3.4.7 The Director may grant written approval on a daily basis for the possession of firearms within areas designated in subsection 8.3.4.6 ~~above~~, upon written application showing good cause related to self-defense or the defense of family, and due regard for the safety of others within areas designated in subsection 8.3.4.6 ~~above~~.
- 8.3.4.8 Active duty and qualified retired law enforcement officers may possess firearms within areas administered by the Division, including areas designated in subsection 8.3.4.6 ~~above~~.
- 8.3.4.9 Delaware residents holding an active current permit to carry a concealed deadly weapon may carry a firearm within areas administered by the Division, including areas designated in subsection 8.3.4.6 ~~above~~.
- 8.3.4.10 Firearms may be carried within areas administered by the Division, outside of areas designated in subsection 8.3.4.6 ~~above~~, by any person not prohibited by [11 Del.C. §1448](#).
- 8.3.4.11 Law enforcement officers may limit the discharge of firearms and the use of other weapons within areas administered by the Division, in order to protect public safety and preserve the peace.
- 8.3.5 Dikes. It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt from any dike administered by the Division. It shall be unlawful for any person to crab or fish on or from any dike or water control structure or within any impoundment administered by the Division.
- 8.3.6 Deer Hunting By Driving. It shall be unlawful to participate in deer drives, except where authorized on current wildlife area maps between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. No more than 6 hunters may participate in driving deer at any ~~one~~ 1 time.
- 8.4 Horses and Bicycles. It shall be unlawful to ride horses or bicycles on, or allow horses to use, any lands or waters administered by the Division, except on roads or trails that have been designated by the Division for such purposes on current wildlife area maps.
- 8.5 Concessions, Posters and Solicitations
 - 8.5.1 It shall be unlawful for any person to erect, post or distribute any placard, sign, notice, poster, billboard or handbill on lands or waters administered by the Division without written authorization of the Director.
 - 8.5.2 It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in the vending of merchandise, food or services on lands or waters administered by the Division without written authorization of the Director.
 - 8.5.3 It shall be unlawful for any person to do any form of solicitation for money or goods on any lands or waters administered by the Division without written authorization of the Director.
- 8.6 Firewood. It shall be unlawful for any person to remove firewood from lands administered by the Division without a permit from the Division, except when special firewood areas are designated by the Director in writing.
- 8.7 Dog Training
 - 8.7.1 General. It shall be unlawful for any person to train a dog on lands or waters administered by the Division, except:
 - 8.7.1.1 During open hunting seasons for the game that the dog is being trained to hunt;
 - 8.7.1.2 Within a dog training area established by the Division; and
 - 8.7.1.3 As permitted by the Director in writing on current wildlife area maps.
 - 8.7.2 C&D Canal Summit Area. It shall be unlawful for any person to enter the dog training area west of the Summit Bridge (Rt. 896), designated on the current wildlife area map of the C&D Canal Wildlife Area, for any purpose other than to train dogs or hunt for deer during the shotgun deer seasons. It shall be unlawful for any person to fish, operate a model or full size boat, ride horses or bicycles, or conduct any other activity on the area.
- 8.8 Geocaching. It shall be unlawful to place caches or letterboxes on Division of Fish and Wildlife property without a permit from the Division. Permits may be obtained by submitting a completed permit application to the appropriate Fish and Wildlife Regional Office. The proposed caching location will be specified in the

application. The Regional Fish and Wildlife Manager will review and approve or deny the permit request. A permit will be valid for a maximum of ~~one~~ 1 year from the date of issue at which time the geocache or letterbox must be removed or re-permitted. The permitted time frame will be determined by the area manager and be based on the local wildlife species present and the management activities planned for the area. The area manager will be provided the location of the cache or letterbox and may remove it at ~~his or her~~ the area manager's discretion, with notice to the permit holder, should circumstances warrant. Online geocache and letterbox descriptions, such as those on geocaching.com or letterboxing.org must include information about access during hunting seasons and provide a link to Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife hunting information. Geocache and letterbox contents must be suitable for all ages. Food, alcohol, tobacco, weapons or other dangerous items, prescription or illegal drugs and adult items are prohibited. From September 1 through February 15 of each year and during the spring turkey hunting season, the placement of or searching for geocaches and letterboxes may only occur on Sundays from sunrise to sunset. During the remainder of the year, geocaching and letterbox activities may occur 7 days per week from sunrise to sunset.

3 DE Reg. 289 (08/01/99)

11 DE Reg. 334 (09/01/07)

12 DE Reg. 496 (10/01/08)

15 DE Reg. 1505 (04/01/12)

21 DE Reg. 888 (05/01/18)

22 DE Reg. 778 (03/01/19)

27 DE Reg. 874 (05/01/24)

9.0 Wildlife Theft Prevention Fund.

(Penalty Section **7 Del.C. §103(d)**)

9.1 Schedule of Rewards

9.1.1 The Division shall pay up to \$1000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of any person found guilty of:

9.1.1.1 Commercialization of wildlife; or

9.1.1.2 Killing an endangered species or a species classified as a threatened species in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended; or

9.1.1.3 Violating any rule or regulation of the Department pertaining to antlered deer.

9.1.2 The Division shall pay up to \$500 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of any person found guilty of:

9.1.2.1 Illegally hunting game birds to include waterfowl or turkeys;

9.1.2.2 Poisoning wildlife;

9.1.2.3 Gross over-limits of wildlife;

9.1.2.4 Illegally hunting on State game refuges;

9.1.2.5 Hunting or trapping out of season;

9.1.2.6 Illegally hunting at night or from a motor vehicle or vessel;

9.1.2.7 Hunting during license revocation without a license, or fraudulently obtaining or using a hunting or trapping license;

9.1.2.8 Tending or setting body-gripping traps with a jaw spread in excess of 5 inches;

9.1.2.9 Guiding paid hunts without a guide license;

9.1.2.10 Violating any rule or regulation of the Department pertaining to antlerless deer;

9.1.2.11 Willfully impeding lawful hunting or trapping; or

9.1.2.12 Wanton waste of a game animal whereby a person killing a game animal did not make a reasonable effort to retrieve the wounded or dead game animal.

9.1.3 The Division shall pay up to \$100 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of any person found guilty.

9.1.3.1 Hunting or wounding wildlife with an unlawful weapon or firearm;

9.1.3.2 Trespassing to hunt or trap; or

9.1.3.3 Using illegal or improperly tagged traps.

9.1.4 The confidentiality of informants and their payments shall be maintained by administrative procedures. Peace officers, Department employees or members of their immediate families are not eligible for rewards.

3 DE Reg. 289 (08/01/99)

27 DE Reg. 874 (05/01/24)

10.0 Nuisance Wildlife

(Penalty Section **7 Del.C. §103(d)**)

10.1 Incorporated Cities or Towns. Within the limits of residential or commercial areas of incorporated cities or towns, or within residential or commercial structures, the following game animals may be controlled (killed) without a permit when they are causing damage: gray squirrel, raccoon, rabbit and opossum. Methods used to control said animals must be consistent with the laws of this State and the regulations of the Department

and only box/cage live traps may be used (without a depredation permit) outside of established trapping seasons.

10.2 Commercial Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators

- 10.2.1 All commercial nuisance wildlife control operator companies conducting work in Delaware must register with the Division and obtain a permit to be able to resolve human/wildlife conflicts. No permit shall be issued to any company, nor shall it remain valid, unless such company has at least 1 certified employee in their employ at all times that directly oversees employees performing nuisance wildlife control work.
- 10.2.2 Certification. To be permitted, all nuisance wildlife control companies must have their employees that are conducting nuisance wildlife control work complete and satisfactorily pass a nuisance wildlife control certification program designated by the Division if they have not already done so within the past 5 years. This training shall be completed within 45 days of employment and before the employees are registered with the Division. Each employee must be re-certified every 5 years. Notwithstanding the foregoing, employees that have not satisfactorily passed a nuisance wildlife control certification program may conduct nuisance wildlife control work if they are accompanied by an employee that has completed the program.
- 10.2.3 Commercial nuisance wildlife control operator companies shall register with the Division all certified employees who conduct nuisance wildlife control work. Registration shall be made when making an application for a permit or, for new employees, within 45 days after employment.
- 10.2.4 Each employee shall retain in their possession the permit issued to the company. This permit is to be carried by the employee when performing nuisance wildlife control work and is to be displayed upon request.
- 10.2.5 The commercial nuisance wildlife control operator company shall provide the Department written notification of a registered employee's employment termination within 45 days of the effective date of termination.
- 10.2.6 Operators and their employees must abide by all Division permit conditions and notify potential clients of their fees. Failure to follow Division permit conditions may result in the revocation of the Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator permit.

3 DE Reg. 289 (08/01/99)

17 DE Reg. 238 (08/01/13)

27 DE Reg. 874 (05/01/24)

11.0 Shoreline Refuges of the Delaware River and Bay

(Penalty Section **7 Del.C. §103(d)**)

- 11.1 State Wildlife Area Protection for Intertidal Areas. Any land located between the high tide line and the low tide line, between the Smyrna River and the St. Jones River and adjoining the Delaware River and Bay is hereby designated a State wildlife area and subject to the rules and regulations pertaining thereto, provided the adjoining landowners to said lands agree to their designation and agree to co-sign complaints concerning violations.
- 11.2 Exemptions. Woodland Beach, Pickering Beach, and Kitts Hummock shall be exempt from this regulation. This regulation shall not affect surf fishing vehicles in areas where such vehicles are permitted or other uses of intertidal areas authorized by permit from the Division.

3 DE Reg. 289 (08/01/99)

12.0 Waterfowl Refuge

(Penalty Section **7 Del.C. §103(d)**)

It shall be unlawful for any person to hunt waterfowl in that part of Drawer Creek west of U.S. Route 13 to where the tributaries of the creek meet routes 428 and 429.

3 DE Reg. 289 (08/01/99)

13.0 Wildlife Rehabilitation Permits

(Penalty Section **7 Del.C. §103(d)**)

13.1 Permit from Division; Exemption

- 13.1.1 It shall be unlawful for any person to hold native wildlife in captivity for the purpose of rehabilitation without a permit from the Division and any other permits required by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- 13.1.2 Licensed veterinarians are exempt from the permitting requirements of this regulation when rendering treatment to injured wildlife and provisions are made to return any recovered animals to the wild or transfer them to a permitted rehabilitator for further care. Licensed veterinarians may only hold wildlife for as long as veterinary care is required.

13.2 Training, Housing and Veterinary Care; Inspections

- 13.2.1 Permit holders must conform to the training, housing, release and veterinary care standards as written in the document "Minimum Standards for Wildlife Rehabilitation" published by the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association and the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council. Permit holders must also abide by the rules and policies set forth in the "State of Delaware Wildlife Rehabilitation Rules and Policies" document. Failure to abide by both of these documents may result in revocation of the

rehabilitation permit. Animals held under rehabilitation permits must be released to the wild according to policies set forth in the document "State of Delaware Wildlife Rehabilitation Rules and Policies" or euthanized, if release is not feasible, unless the Division under [7 Del.C. §555](#) authorizes possession for scientific propagation or educational purposes. For federally listed endangered species and migratory birds an extension must be granted by the migratory bird permit office of the United State Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Division for each individual case. Rehabilitators must not release sick animals into the wild.

13.2.2 Rehabilitation facilities must be available for inspection by Division employees during normal business hours. Normal business hours shall mean Monday through Friday, except those days designated as holidays, during the hours in which the staff of the Division is scheduled to work. Violations of compliance with the Minimum Standards or the Rules and Policies noted in subsection 13.2.1 will result in a written warning or immediate revocation of the rehabilitation permit depending on the violation. Persons receiving a warning will have their facility re-inspected. Failure to address the ~~problem(s)~~ problems in a timely manner will result in permit revocation. Upon permit revocation, all animals will be removed from the facility and either placed with another rehabilitator, released into the wild, placed with an educational facility, or humanly euthanized.

13.3 Rabies Vector Species

13.3.1 It shall be unlawful for any person to attempt rehabilitation of a rabies vector species without having proof of current pre-exposure immunization against the rabies virus. No permitted rehabilitator shall knowingly expose other non-immunized persons to a rabies vector species. For the purpose of the Delaware Wildlife Rehabilitator Permit, rabies vector species are defined as bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes, ~~coyotes~~ coyotes, and woodchucks.

13.3.2 All rehabilitated rabies vector species must be released in the county of origin and the Division must be notified of the release location in the rehabilitator's annual report to the Division. It shall be unlawful for rehabilitated rabies vector species to be released on State Wildlife Management Areas without the consent of the Division Director.

3 DE Reg. 289 (08/01/99)

11 DE Reg. 334 (09/01/07)

27 DE Reg. 874 (05/01/24)

14.0 Falconry

(Penalty Section [7 Del.C. §103\(d\)](#))

14.1 Federal Regulations Adopted. It shall be unlawful for any person to practice the sport of falconry, except in such a manner as prescribed by regulations promulgated under provisions of 50 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) §§ 21.29 and 21.30. The Federal regulations are hereby made part of the regulations of the Department as prescribed in [7 Del.C. §725](#). Notwithstanding the foregoing, the federal regulations governing falconry shall be superseded by more stringent restrictions prescribed by law or regulation of the Department.

14.2 Permits

14.2.1 A resident wishing to practice falconry shall apply to the Division for a falconry permit. To be issued a falconry permit, the person shall successfully pass a written test and have their facilities and equipment inspected by Division staff or an appointed Master Falconer to ensure that they meet the standards as prescribed by the federal regulations.

14.2.2 A nonresident falconer who possesses a valid falconry permit issued by any other state listed in 50CFR21.29 may possess, import, export, or transport migratory birds of the orders Accipitriformes, Falconiformes, or Strigiformes held under the authority of such a permit in Delaware.

14.2.3 No additional falconry permit shall be required for a nonresident falconry permit holder to practice falconry in Delaware.

14.2.4 Falconers who take up residence in Delaware shall have 60 days to obtain a Delaware falconry permit. During this interim period, a current falconry permit issued by the previous state of residence shall be recognized for the purposes of legally practicing falconry in Delaware.

14.2.5 Falconry permits shall be effective, unless revoked, for a period of up to 3 years and coincide with the license period for the hunting license.

14.3 Taking of Raptors

14.3.1 It shall be unlawful for any person to take any birds of prey from the wild without a permit from the Division. Each capture permit will be limited to the taking of 1 bird of prey.

14.3.2 In 2012, and each year thereafter until changed, the Division may allow the taking of a total of 12 birds of prey from the wild in Delaware. Upon request, the Director shall propose a revised annual limit on the number of raptors which may be taken from the wild and shall appear before the Council on Wildlife and Freshwater Fish to receive input on such limit before its revision or adoption.

14.3.3 Falconers may possess wild caught raptors identified as state threatened or endangered under Section 16.0 of this regulation and [7 Del.C. §602](#), provided they were acquired in Delaware prior to the species being listed, or if they were acquired from a state in which their take was legal.

14.3.4 The taking of eyas (nestling) birds shall be limited to red-tailed hawks and great horned owls on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from February 1 through July 15. No more than 3 eyas red-tailed

hawks or 3 nestling great horned owls, or any combination thereof, may be taken during this period each year. Nonresident falconers may apply for available permits to take eyas raptors, provided the state in which the nonresident resides allows Delaware residents the reciprocal opportunity to remove eyas raptors.

14.3.5 Apprentices may only possess wild caught red-tailed hawks, red shouldered hawks, and wild captured American kestrels legally obtained from another state. Apprentices may not possess captive reared birds or hybrids.

14.3.6 The season for the taking of passage birds shall be from August 15 through March 31. Raptors in adult plumage must be released immediately at the site of capture. Nonresident falconers may apply to obtain any available permits to take passage raptors in Delaware, provided the state in which the nonresident resides has a reciprocal arrangement that permits Delaware residents to take passage raptors.

14.3.7 It shall be unlawful to remove raptors from private property without the express consent of the landowner. It shall also be unlawful for any person to remove raptors from State parks, State forests, State wildlife areas, State owned wetland mitigation sites, national wildlife refuges, nature preserves, natural areas, and county or local parks without written approval of the agency administering the property. The permit to remove a raptor from the wild must be in possession of the falconer when attempting to capture a raptor. Apprentice falconers must be under the direct supervision of the Apprentice's sponsor or a Master or General class falconer when removing raptors from the wild.

14.4 Hunting

14.4.1 Resident and nonresident falconers shall be properly licensed to hunt game in the State of Delaware as described under 7 Del.C. Ch. 5.

14.4.2 Falconry shall be a legal method of take for all game birds and game animals in Delaware. The hunting season for resident game, which excludes migratory game birds, shall be from September 1 through March 31.

14.4.3 A falconer whose raptor accidentally kills wildlife during a closed season for such wildlife shall leave the dead wildlife where it lies, except the raptor may feed upon the wildlife before leaving the site of the kill, provided that the wildlife shall not be reduced to possession by the falconer.

3 DE Reg. 289 (08/01/99)

3 DE Reg. 1738 (06/01/00)

6 DE Reg. 536 (10/01/02)

17 DE Reg. 238 (08/01/13)

24 DE Reg. 874 (05/01/24)

15.0 Possession, Collection or Sale of Native Wildlife

(Penalty Section 7 Del.C. §103(d))

15.1 Possession or Sale

15.1.1 Unless otherwise provided by law or regulation of the Department, it shall be unlawful for any person to collect, possess, import, cause to be imported, export, cause to be exported, buy, sell or offer for sale any native wildlife species or any part thereof without a permit from the Director as authorized by existing law or regulation. The permit shall limit the terms and conditions for collecting or possessing said wildlife within the State.

15.1.2 Notwithstanding subsection 15.1.1 of this section, live native wildlife species may be possessed, imported, sold or offered for sale without a permit from the Director if there is written documentation to confirm that said wildlife was legally taken in and transported from another state.

15.1.3 Notwithstanding subsection 15.1.2 of this section or as otherwise provided by law or regulation of the Department, the following live rabies vector species of coyotes, gray fox, groundhogs, opossums, raccoons, skunks, and red fox may not be possessed, imported, sold, or offered for sale.

15.1.4 Notwithstanding subsection 15.1.1 of this section, the hides, skins, and parts thereof of furbearers and other animals legally harvested outside of Delaware and finished wildlife taxidermy may be imported, caused to be imported, exported, cause to be exported, purchased, and sold unless otherwise prohibited by existing law or regulation by the Department.

15.2 Collection and Possession of Reptiles and Amphibians

15.2.1 Unless otherwise provided by law or regulation of the Department, it shall be unlawful for any person to remove from the wild or possess any native reptile or amphibian species, their eggs or parts without a permit from the Director.

15.2.2 Notwithstanding subsection 15.2.1 of this section, 1 individual of each of the following species of reptiles and amphibians or parts thereof from the following reptiles, may be collected and possessed without a permit, except 1 amphibian egg mass/cluster or 10 or fewer larval amphibians from the following species may be possessed without a permit provided that no more than 1 adult may be possessed once the individuals metamorphose to adults:

Reptiles

Brownsnake, Dekay's (*Storeria dekayi*)

Cooter, Northern Red-bellied (*Pseudemys rubriventris*)

Gartersnake, Common (*Thamnophis sirtalis*)

Lizard, Eastern Fence (*Sceloporus undulatus*)
Racer, Northern Black (*Coluber constrictor*)
Ratsnake, Eastern (*Pantherophis alleghaniensis*)
Skink, Common Five-lined (*Plestiodon fasciatus*)
Snake, Ring-necked (*Diadophis punctatus*)
Terrapin, Diamond-backed (*Malaclemys terrapin*)
Turtle, Eastern Box (*Terrapene carolina*)
Turtle, Eastern Mud (*Kinosternon subrubrum*)
Turtle, Eastern Musk (*Sternotherus odoratus*)
Turtle, Painted (*Chrysemys picta*)
Turtle, Snapping (*Chelydra serpentina*)
Watersnake, Common (*Nerodia sipedon*)
Wormsnake, Common (*Carphophis amoenus*)

Amphibians

Bullfrog, American (*Lithobates catesbeianus*)
Frog, Eastern Cricket (*Acris crepitans*)
Frog, Green (*Lithobates clamitans*)
Frog, Mid-Atlantic Coast Leopard (*Lithobates kauffeldi*)
Frog, New Jersey Chorus (*Pseudacris kalmi*)
Frog, Pickerel (*Lithobates palustris*)
Frog, Southern Leopard (*Lithobates sphenoccephalus*)
Frog, Wood (*Lithobates sylvaticus*)
Newt, Eastern (*Notophthalmus viridescens*)
Peeper, Spring (*Pseudacris crucifer*)
Salamander, Eastern Red-backed (*Plethodon cinereus*)
Salamander, Marbled (*Ambystoma opacum*)
Salamander, Northern Dusky (*Desmognathus fuscus*)
Salamander, Northern Two-lined (*Eurycea bislineata*)
Spadefoot, Eastern (*Scaphiopus holbrookii*)
Toad, American (*Anaxyrus americanus*)
Toad, Fowler's (*Anaxyrus fowleri*)
Treefrog, Cope's Gray (*Hyla chrysoscelis*)
Treefrog, Gray (*Hyla versicolor*)
Treefrog, Green (*Hyla cinerea*)

15.2.3 It shall be unlawful to remove any reptile or amphibian from the wild and later release said ~~the~~ reptile or amphibian back to the wild if it has been held in captivity for more than 30 days.

15.3 Captive Breeding

15.3.1 It shall be unlawful for any person to breed in captivity any native wildlife species without a permit from the Director. Said permit shall limit the terms and conditions for captive breeding of said wildlife.

15.3.2 It shall be unlawful for any person to release captive-bred species into the wild. A signed bill of sale shall accompany any captive-bred species that are sold.

15.3.3 This section shall not apply to accredited zoos or to raptors regulated by federal and State falconry or raptor propagation regulations.

15.4 Sale or Possession of CITES Listed Species. It shall be unlawful for any person to sell or possess bear gall bladder, or other viscera from any species of bear, or any part of other species listed as prohibited by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). The possession of any part of a bear must be in conformance with CITES.

3 DE Reg. 289 (08/01/99)

3 DE Reg. 1738 (06/01/00)

6 DE Reg. 536 (10/01/02)

15 DE Reg. 1505 (04/01/12)

27 DE Reg. 874 (05/01/24)

16.0 Endangered Species

(Penalty Section **7 Del.C. §103(d)**)

16.1 Importation, Transportation and Possession. Pursuant to **7 Del.C. §601**, the importation, transportation, possession or sale of any endangered species of fish or wildlife, or hides or other parts thereof, or the sale or possession with the intent to sell of any article made in whole or in part from the skin, hide or other parts of endangered species of fish or wildlife is prohibited, except under license or permit from the Division.

16.2 Designation and Removal from Designation of Species by Division

16.2.1 Pursuant to **7 Del.C. §601**, the Division may designate species of fish and wildlife that are seriously threatened with extinction as endangered species. The Division may also remove the designation of endangered from species of fish and wildlife that are no longer seriously threatened with extinction, including species as suggested by the public with sufficient documentation for listing.

16.2.2 For the purposes of this section, the phrase “seriously threatened with extinction” shall mean that the species satisfies one or more of the following criteria:

- 16.2.2.1 Appears on the federal list of endangered, threatened, or candidate species; or
- 16.2.2.2 Ranked as “globally rare” (G1, G2, G3, T1, T2, or T3), which means 100 or fewer populations worldwide; or
- 16.2.2.3 Is rare or declining within the State and rare or declining in the region; or
- 16.2.2.4 Is rare in Delaware and disjunct from known distribution ~~and/or~~ or near the extreme northern or southern limits of distribution; or
- 16.2.2.5 Is imminently threatened by natural or human-made factors that are affecting continued survival of that species within the State.

16.2.3 Based upon the criteria prescribed by subsection 16.2.2 of this section, the following species are declared endangered in this State and are afforded the protection provided by [7 Del.C. §601](#):

Amphibians

- Frog, Carpenter (*Lithobates virgatipes*)
- Salamander, Mud (*Pseudotriton montanus*)
- Salamander, Eastern Tiger (*Ambystoma tigrinum*)
- Treefrog, Barking (*Hyla gratiosa*)

Birds

- Grebe, Pied-billed^{BR} (*Podilymbus podiceps*)
 - Harrier, Northern^{BR} (*Circus cyaneus*)
 - Hawk, Broad-winged^{BR} (*Buteo platypterus*)
 - Heron, Black-Crowned Night- (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)
 - Heron, Yellow-Crowned Night- (*Nyctanassa violacea*)
 - Kestrel, American (*Falco sparverius*)
 - Knot, Red (*Calidris canutus*)
 - Plover, Piping (*Charadrius melodus*)
 - Owl, Short-eared^{BR} (*Asio flammeus*)
 - Oystercatcher, American (*Haematopus palliatus*)
 - Rail, Black (*Laterallus jamaicensis*)
 - Sandpiper, Upland (*Bartramia longicauda*)
 - Skimmer, Black (*Rynchops niger*)
 - Sparrow, Henslow's (*Ammodramus henslowii*)
 - Sparrow, Saltmarsh (*Ammodramus caudacuta*)
 - Tern, Common^{BR} (*Sterna hirundo*)
 - Tern, Forster's^{BR} (*Sterna forsteri*)
 - Tern, Least (*Sterna antillarum*)
 - Warbler, Cerulean (*Setophaga cerulea*)
 - Warbler, Hooded^{BR} (*Setophaga citrina*)
 - Warbler, Swainson's (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*)
 - Wren, Sedge (*Cistothorus platensis*)
- ^{BR} Breeding population only

Fish

- Darter, Glassy (*Etheostoma vitreum*)
- Sculpin, Blueridge (*Cottus caeruleomentumum*)
- Shiner, Bridled (*Notropis bifrenatus*)
- Shiner, Ironcolor (*Notropis chalybaeus*)
- Sturgeon, Atlantic (*Acipenser oxyrhynchus*)
- Sturgeon, Shortnose (*Acipenser brevirostrum*)
- Sunfish, Blackbanded (*Enneacanthus chaetodon*)

Insects

- Beetle, Little White Tiger (*Cicindela lepida*)
- Beetle, White Tiger (*Cicindela dorsalis*)
- Beetle, Seth Forest Scavenger (*Hydrochus spangleri*)
- Bluet, Burgundy (*Enallagma dubium*)
- Bluet, Pale (*Enallagma pallidum*)
- Checkerspot, Baltimore (*Euphydryas phaeton*)
- Clubtail, Banner (*Gomphus apomyius*)
- Clubtail, Laura's (*Stylurus laurae*)
- Clubtail, Midland (*Gomphus fraternus*)
- Clubtail, Sable (*Gomphus rogersi*)
- Darner, Black-tipped (*Aeshna tuberculifera*)
- Darner, Taper-tailed (*Gomphaeschna antelope*)
- Dash, Black (*Euphyes conspiciua*)
- Elfin, Frosted (*Incisalia irus*)

Emerald, Treetop (*Somatochlora provocans*)
Firefly, Bethany Beach (*Photuris bethaniensis*)
Hairstreak, Hessel's (*Mitoura hesseli*)
Hairstreak, King's (*Satyrium kingi*)
Moth, Aralia Shoot Borer (*Papaipema araliae*)
Moth, Dark Stoneroot Borer (*Papaipema duplicatus*)
Moth, Maritime Sunflower Borer (*Papaipema maritima*)
Moth, Pitcher Plant Borer (*Papaipema appassionata*)
Moth, Yellow Stoneroot Borer (*Papaipema astuta*)
Skimmer, Elfin (*Nannothemis bella*)
Skipper, Rare (*Problema bulenta*)
Spiketail, Brown (*Cordulegaster bilineata*)
Sundragon, Sely's (*Helocordulia selysii*)
Underwing, Marbled (*Catocala marmorata*)
Underwing, Ulalume (*Catocala ulalume*)
Wing, Mulberry (*Poanes massasoit massasoit*)
Wing, Chermock's Mulberry (*Poanes massasoit chermocki*)

Mammals

Bat, Little Brown (*Myotis lucifugus*)
Bat, Northern Long-eared (*Myotis septentrionalis*)
Bat, Tri-colored (*Perimyotis subflavus*)
Squirrel, Delmarva Fox (*Sciurus niger cinereus*)
Whale, Blue (*Balaenoptera musculus*)
Whale, Fin (*Balaenoptera physalus*)
Whale, Humpback (*Megaptera novaengliae*)
Whale, North Atlantic Right (*Eubalaena glacialis*)
Whale, Sei (*Balaenoptera borealis*)
Whale, Sperm (*Physeter macrocephalus*)

Mollusks

Lampmussel, Yellow (*Lampsilis cariosa*)
Lampmussel, Eastern (*Lampsilis radiata*)
Wedgemussel, Dwarf (*Alasmidonta heterodon*)
Pondmussel, Eastern (*Ligumia nasuta*)
Floater, Brook (*Alasmidonta varicosa*)
Floater, Triangle (*Alasmidonta undulata*)
Mucket, Tidewater (*Leptodea ochracea*)

Reptiles

Cornsnake, Red (*Pantherophis guttatus*)
Sea Turtle, Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*)
Sea Turtle, Kemp's Ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*)
Sea Turtle, Green (*Chelonia mydas*)
Sea Turtle, Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*)
Turtle, Bog (*Glyptemys muhlenbergii*)
Scarletsnake (*Cemophora coccinea*)
Watersnake, Plain-bellied (*Nerodia erythrogaster*)

16.3 Federally Listed Species

16.3.1 Pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 USC §§ 1531-1543), as amended, the Secretary of the Interior must publish in the Federal Register a list of all fish and wildlife species determined by him or her ~~the Secretary of the Interior~~ or the Secretary of Commerce to be endangered species. The federal list of endangered species is hereby adopted and all species listed thereon are hereby declared to be endangered species in the State as prescribed in [7 Del.C. §601](#).

16.3.2 It shall be unlawful for any person to collect, possess or sell any species of fish or wildlife listed as endangered or threatened pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, without the appropriate federal permits.

3 DE Reg. 1738 (06/01/00)

6 DE Reg. 536 (10/01/02)

17 DE Reg. 238 (08/01/13)

27 DE Reg. 874 (05/01/24)

17.0 Transferring Harvested Game

(Penalty Section [7 Del.C. §103\(d\)](#))

No person shall put or leave any harvested game animal, game bird or non-native/invasive wildlife at any place (other than at their personal abode), or in the custody of another person for cleaning, processing, shipping, transportation, or storage (including temporary storage), or for the purpose of having taxidermy

services performed, unless such animals have a tag attached, signed by the hunter, stating their address, the total number and species harvested, and the date such animals were killed. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the transfer procedures for harvested deer and turkeys shall follow the requirements described by regulation of the Department; which states a registration number shall be indicated on a possession tag that is affixed to the animal.

6 DE Reg. 536 (10/01/02)

27 DE Reg. 874 (05/01/24)

18.0 Wanton Waste

Penalty Section **7 Del.C. §103(d)**

18.1 Retrieval and Possession of Game Animals. A person wounding or killing a game animal shall make a reasonable effort to retrieve the wounded or dead game animal. The retrieved game animal shall be retained in the individual's possession until any of the following occurs:

18.1.1 The game animal is processed for consumption, consumed or utilized for its fur value.

18.1.2 The game animal is transported to the individual's residence, to a taxidermist, or to a place of commercial processing.

18.1.3 The game animal is utilized for scientific, educational or research purposes.

18.2 Any use of a game animal as not described in subsections 18.1.1 - 18.1.3 above will be deemed wanton waste.

11 DE Reg. 334 (09/01/07)

19.0 Permits

(Penalty Section **7 Del.C. §103(d)**)

It shall be unlawful to violate any conditions as provided within any permit issued by the Division or the Department pursuant to Title 7 of the Delaware Code.

20.0 Game Bird Releases

(Penalty Section **7 Del.C. §103(d)**)

20.1 All persons releasing domestically raised quail, chukar partridge, Hungarian ~~partridge~~ partridge, and pheasants into the wild must obtain a permit from the Division. If releasing 25 or fewer, in aggregate, annually, a Gamebird Release Permit is required. If releasing ~~25 or fewer~~ 26 or more, in aggregate, annually, a Gamebird Breeders Permit is required.

20.2 All domestically raised quail, chukar partridge, Hungarian ~~partridge~~ partridge, and pheasants must have an auxiliary marker affixed to each bird before being released into the wild. All auxiliary markers must be yellow. Persons herein must report the number of birds marked and released, and the type of bird released (quail, chukar partridge, Hungarian partridge, or pheasant).

20.3 Anyone that releases domestically raised quail must provide the location of the release to the Division and obtain approval prior to releasing any birds.

12 DE Reg. 496 (10/01/08)

27 DE Reg. 874 (05/01/24)

21.0 Guide License

(Penalty Section **7 Del.C. §103(d)**)

21.1 Persons required to obtain a Delaware Guide License. All individuals receiving monetary or in-kind compensation for providing personal guide services to hunters are required to have a Delaware Guide License.

21.2 Age Requirement. Persons acquiring a guide license, must be 18 years of age or older

21.3 Fish and Wildlife Violations. Persons acquiring a guide license must not have been convicted for violations of any wildlife or fisheries statutes or regulations within the last three years prior to applying for a Delaware Guide License.

21.4 Reporting. All persons possessing a Delaware Guide License are required to complete and submit an annual report to the Division by July 1 annually to include the following information which must be readily available for inspection by enforcement officers: full name of each hunter, address of each hunter in the party, hunting license number for each hunter, date, number and species of each animal harvested, location of hunts and the name and license number of the guide.

21.5 Record Retention. The guide shall retain all hunting field records for a period of 3 years.

21.6 License

21.6.1 A resident or nonresident hunting license is not required for persons holding a valid Delaware Guide License.

21.6.2 A nonresident shall be exempt from the guide licensing requirement of this section only while guiding hunters for snow geese (light geese), provided:

21.6.2.1 The nonresident is properly licensed to guide in another state or Canadian province which extends the same exemption to Delaware residents;

- 21.6.2.2 The nonresident must not have been convicted for violations of any wildlife or fisheries statutes or regulations within the last 3 years.
- 21.6.2.3 The nonresident guide purchases a Delaware migratory waterfowl stamp and obtains a Delaware H.I.P. permit.
- 21.6.2.4 The nonresident resides in another state or Canadian province which extends the same exemption to Delaware residents.

12 DE Reg. 496 (10/01/08)

14 DE Reg. 52 (07/01/10)

27 DE Reg. 874 (05/01/24)

22.0 Hunter and Trapper License Exempt Number

(Penalty Section 7 Del.C. §103(d))

- 22.1 Hunters and trappers who are exempt from purchasing a license to hunt or trap in Delaware are required to obtain an annual Hunter and Trapper License Exempt Number from the Division.
 - 22.2 A separate number is provided for each activity (hunting and trapping) and these numbers must be carried by the hunter or trapper while engaged in hunting and trapping activities.
 - 22.3 It shall be unlawful to obtain:
 - 22.3.1 More than 1 hunting or trapping License Exempt Number annually (July 1 through June 30 of the following year).
 - 22.3.2 A License Exempt Number after purchasing a hunting or trapping license for the same activity.
- 12 DE Reg. 496 (10/01/08)
14 DE Reg. 52 (07/01/10)
15 DE Reg. 1505 (04/01/12)
27 DE Reg. 874 (05/01/24)

23.0 Non-native/Invasive Wildlife

(Penalty Section 7 Del.C. §103(d))

- 23.1 Non-native Wildlife
 - 23.1.1 Coyotes
 - 23.1.1.1 It shall be unlawful to possess, buy, sell, barter, trade, or transfer any live coyote to or from another person unless permitted by the Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife.
 - 23.1.1.2 Coyotes may be killed or trapped in accordance with the regulations found within this Section with the following: longbow, crossbow, shotgun, rimfire rifle or centerfire rifle up to .25 caliber, a muzzle-loading rifle, foothold trap, cable restraint, or box/cage trap. Notwithstanding the foregoing, coyotes may be killed in accordance with 7 Del.C. §802.
 - ~~23.1.1.2.1~~ Notwithstanding subsection 23.1.1.2 of this section, during any deer firearms season, it shall be unlawful to hunt coyotes with any firearm that is not also legal for deer hunting.
 - 23.1.1.3 Hunting Season. Coyotes may be hunted and harvested from ~~September 1 through the last day of February~~ July 1 through June 30.
 - 23.1.1.4 Trapping Season. Coyotes may be trapped in accordance with the statutes and regulations of the State of Delaware governing the trapping coyotes: from November 1 through March 10 using foothold, cable restraints, or cage/box traps.
 - ~~23.1.1.5 Reporting Harvest. After harvesting a coyote, a hunter and/or trapper must report the harvest to the Division of Fish and Wildlife by the end of the next business day using its established reporting system.~~
 - 23.1.2 Invasive Wildlife
 - 23.2.1 Nutria (*Myocastor coypus*)
 - 23.2.1.1 It shall be unlawful to possess, buy, sell, barter, trade, or transfer any live nutria to or from another person unless permitted by the Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife.
 - 23.2.1.2 Nutria may only be trapped during the lawful season to trap muskrats. Notwithstanding the foregoing, nutria may be killed in accordance with 7 Del.C. §802. Any nutria captured within a trap must be killed and may not be released alive back into the wild.
 - 23.2.1.3 Anyone harvesting a nutria must notify the Division of Fish & Wildlife by the end of the next business day using its established reporting system.
 - 23.2.2 Free-roaming Swine
 - 23.2.2.1 It shall be unlawful for any person to release swine into the wild. If swine kept in captivity escape and cannot be recaptured within 72 hours the Delaware Division of Fish & Wildlife and the Delaware Department of Agriculture must be contacted.
 - 23.2.2.2 It shall be unlawful for any person to harbor free-roaming swine.
 - 23.2.2.3 It shall be unlawful for any person to kill free-roaming swine without first obtaining a permit from the Division.
 - 23.2.2.3.1 It shall be unlawful to recreationally hunt free-roaming swine.
 - 23.2.2.3.2 It shall be unlawful for a landowner to charge a fee for the purpose of killing free-roaming swine.

[17 DE Reg. 746 \(01/01/14\)](#)
[19 DE Reg. 927 \(04/01/16\)](#)
[27 DE Reg. 874 \(05/01/24\)](#)

24.0 Wildlife Management Zone Boundaries

(Penalty Section 7 [Del.C. §103\(d\)](#))

For the purposes of hunting and reporting harvests (if required), the following descriptions shall delineate the boundaries of Delaware's Wildlife Management Zones:

Zone 1A - Land north of the line created beginning at the Delaware Memorial Bridge and following Interstate 295 to its intersection with Interstate 95 to the Delaware/Maryland border.

Zone 1B - Land south of the line created beginning at the Delaware Memorial Bridge and following Interstate 295 to its intersection with Interstate 95, thence to the Delaware-Maryland border to the C&D Canal.

Zone 2 - Land bordered north by C&D Canal, south by Route 6, east by Route 13, and west by the Maryland State Line.

Zone 3 - Land bordered north by the C&D Canal, south by Route 6, east by the Delaware River, and west by Route 13.

Zone 4 - Land bordered north by Route 6, south by Route 8, east by Route 13, and west by the Maryland State Line.

Zone 5 - Land bordered north by Route 6, south by Road 18, east by Delaware Bay, and west by Routes 13 and 113.

Zone 6 - Land bordered north by Route 8, south by Route 12, east by Routes 13 and 113, and west by the Maryland State Line.

Zone 7 - Land bordered north by Route 12, south by Route 16, east by Route 13, and west by the Maryland state Line.

Zone 8 - Land bordered north by intersection of Routes 13 and 113, south by Route 16, east by Route 113 and west by Route 13.

Zone 9 - Land bordered north by Road 18, south by Route 1, east by Delaware Bay and Atlantic Ocean and west by Routes 113 and 1.

Zone 10 - Land bordered north by Route 16, south by Route 20, east by Route 13, and west by the Maryland State Line.

Zone 11 - Lane bordered north by Route 16, south by Route 9, east by Route 113 and west by Route 13.

Zone 12 - Land bordered north by intersection of Routes 113 and 1, south by Route 9, east by Route 1 and west by Route 113.

Zone 13 - Land bordered north by Route 20, south by Maryland State Line, east by Route 13, and west by Maryland State Line.

Zone 14 - Land bordered north by Route 9, south by Route 24, east by Route 113, and south by Route 24.

Zone 15 - Land bordered north by Route 9, south by south shore of Indian River Bay, east by the Atlantic Ocean, and west by Route 113.

Zone 16 - Land bordered north by Route 24, south by Maryland State Line, east by Route 113, and west by Route 13.

Zone 17 - Land bordered north by Indian River Bay, south by the Maryland State Line, east by the Atlantic Ocean, and west by Route 113.

[27 DE Reg. 874 \(05/01/24\)](#)

[3 DE Reg. 289 \(08/01/99\)](#)

[3 DE Reg. 1738 \(06/01/00\)](#)

[6 DE Reg. 536 \(10/01/02\)](#)

[8 DE Reg. 352 \(08/01/04\)](#)

[11 DE Reg. 334 \(09/01/07\)](#)

[12 DE Reg. 496 \(10/01/08\)](#)

[13 DE Reg. 941 \(01/01/10\)](#)

[14 DE Reg. 52 \(07/01/10\)](#)

[15 DE Reg. 1505 \(04/01/12\)](#)

[17 DE Reg. 238 \(08/01/13\)](#)

[17 DE Reg. 746 \(01/01/14\)](#)

[19 DE Reg. 927 \(04/01/16\)](#)

[21 DE Reg. 888 \(05/01/18\)](#)

[22 DE Reg. 778 \(03/01/19\)](#)

[27 DE Reg. 874 \(05/01/24\)](#)