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OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #542667

Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 1501:31-15-09 Hunting and trapping regulations for furbearing animals.

Effective: November 15, 2026

(A) Throughout the state, it shall be unlawful for a person to hunt, trap, take, or possess furbearing animals except according to this rule and other rules in the Administrative Code or the Revised Code.

(B) There is no bag limit or possession limit on fox, skunk, weasel, raccoon, opossum, mink, coyotes, beaver or muskrat.

(C) It shall be unlawful for any person to pursue, hunt, or trap furbearing animals from sunset to sunrise, without carrying a continuous white light visible for a distance of at least one-quarter of a mile. However, persons hunting fox, raccoon or coyote with a call from a stationary position may use a continuous single beam light of any color. When two or more persons are hunting or trapping together for such animals, one light only is required and may be carried by any member of the party.

(D) It shall be unlawful for any person to train dogs pursuing furbearing animals during the closed season except from six p.m. to six a.m. daily.

(E) It shall be unlawful for any person to use or possess climbers, or any other device that may be used for climbing trees except tree stands, while hunting, trapping or pursuing furbearing animals.

(F) It shall be unlawful for any person to fail to immediately kill and reduce to the person's possession or immediately release at the capture site any trapped furbearing animal.

(G) It shall be unlawful for any person engaged in trapping to fail to visit and remove all animals from their traps once every calendar day.

(H) It shall be unlawful for any person to set, use, or maintain a trap or snare for the purpose of taking a wild animal, unless such trap or snare has attached thereto a durable waterproof tag bearing the name and mailing address or unique division of wildlife customer identification number of the user in English letters legible at all times, or which has the name and mailing address or unique division of wildlife customer identification number of the user stamped into such trap in English letters legible at all times.

(I) It shall be unlawful for any person to disturb or molest a legally set trap, dispatch or remove a furbearing animal from a trap of another person without permission from the trap owner or user.

(J) It shall be unlawful for any person to erect, post, or place any stake, flagging or any other type of marker for the purpose of identifying a proposed trap set location on any area designated as public hunting area unless authorized by the chief of the division of wildlife.

AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #542667

(K) Trapping methods:

(1) It shall be unlawful for any person to place, set, or maintain any type of trap other than a cage trap, body gripping trap, foot encapsulating trap, foothold trap, or snare for the purpose of taking a wild animal.

(2) It shall be unlawful for any person to use a trap, for the purpose of taking a wild animal, having teeth on the gripping surface.

(3) It shall be unlawful to use any flesh bait for the purpose of trapping a wild animal that is not totally covered.

(4) It shall be unlawful for any person to set, use, or maintain, a trap or snare in or upon any path, or road ordinarily used by domestic animals or human beings.

(5) Except as provided in rule 1501:31-15-03 of the Administrative Code, it shall be unlawful for any person at any time to shoot a mink, muskrat, river otter or beaver that is not caught in a trap or snare.

(6) It shall be unlawful for any person to set, use, or maintain any type of a trap on land, except a cage trap, for the purpose of taking a wild animal within one hundred fifty feet of an occupied residence without advising a person residing therein. Persons trapping on land that they own or where they reside are exempt from the provisions in this paragraph.

(7) Foothold traps:

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to set, use, or maintain a foothold trap, on land, for the purpose of taking a wild animal, that has an inside diameter jaw spread greater than five and three eights inches, except foothold traps with a jaw spread not larger than six inches may be utilized when they meet the following:

(i) The jaws have a minimum of five-sixteenths inch gripping surface.

(ii) Each trap has a minimum of three swiveling points.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to set, use, or maintain a foothold trap, submerged in the water, for the purpose of taking a wild animal, that has an inside diameter jaw spread greater than eight and one-quarter inches.

(c) It shall be unlawful for any person to set, use, or maintain any foothold trap on land or in water, for the purpose of taking a wild animal, that is not covered.

AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #542667

(d) It shall be unlawful for any person to set, use, or maintain a foot encapsulating trap that has an opening that is greater than two inches in diameter or two inches along any one side.

(e) It shall be unlawful to set a foothold or foot encapsulating trap on land that has less than two swiveling points.

(8) Body gripping traps:

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to set, use, or maintain a body gripping trap for the purpose of taking a wild animal with a jaw measurement greater than five inches on land.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to set, use, or maintain a body gripping trap for the purpose of taking a wild animal, with a jaw measurement of greater than five inches or less than or equal to seven inches unless partially or completely submerged in a natural body of water, except as provided in paragraph (N) of this rule.

(c) It shall be unlawful for any person to set, use, or maintain a body gripping trap for the purpose of taking a wild animal with a jaw measurement of greater than seven inches unless completely submerged in water and only during the open trapping season for beaver or river otter.

(9) Snares:

(a) It shall be unlawful for a person to set, use, and maintain a snare for the purpose of taking furbearing animals that does not have a relaxing lock and a stop to prevent the opening of the snare from closing to a diameter of less than two and one half inches in diameter, or a relaxing lock system with a breaking point of not greater than three hundred fifty pounds.

(b) It shall be unlawful to use a snare that is not securely attached or affixed to an immovable object or securely staked.

(c) It shall be unlawful to set, use, or maintain any snare on any area designated as a public hunting area except on those areas listed in paragraph (L)(1) of this rule and then only when beaver or river otter trapping. A snare shall have a minimum loop diameter of at least ten inches and the bottom of the snare must be covered with not less than one inch of water at all times while set on those areas listed in paragraph (L)(1) of this rule.

(d) It shall be unlawful to use any snare that is constructed of any material other than multi strand steel cable.

AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #542667

(e) It shall be unlawful to set a snare with a loop diameter of greater than fifteen inches.

(f) It shall be unlawful to have attached to a snare any spring loaded or mechanical device to assist the snare in closing.

(L) Special area regulations:

(1) It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in trapping for beaver or river otter on any state public hunting area area unless such person has a special beaver or river otter trapping permit for that specific public hunting area issued by the chief of the division of wildlife or their representative.

(2) It shall be unlawful to trap beaver or river otter on American electric power lands without written permission from the company or its authorized representative.

(3) It shall be unlawful for any person to remove, disturb, or destroy a beaver dam located on any division owned, administered or controlled area without permission from the chief of the division of wildlife or on any private land without permission of the landowner.

(M) River otter regulations:

It shall be unlawful for any person who kills a river otter during the river otter trapping season to fail to complete either the online or in-person game check process.

(1) In-person game check process:

To complete the in-person game check process, the person who killed the river otter must:

(a) Deliver the river otter pelt to a division of wildlife representative, during normal business hours, for checking and CITES tagging within five business days following harvest;

(b) Accurately report the date of harvest, location of harvest, and any other information requested by the division of wildlife.

(2) Online game check process:

To complete the online game check process, each person who kills a river otter must:

AUTHENTICATED,
OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
COMMISSION
DOCUMENT #542667

(a) Complete online game check by noon following the date that the river otter was harvested in the manner prescribed by the chief of the division of wildlife;

(b) Accurately report the date of harvest, location of harvest, and any other information requested by the division of wildlife;

(c) Within twenty-four hours of receiving a division of wildlife-issued CITES tag for a river otter, attach said tag to the river otter pelt.

(N) For the purposes of this rule, traps shall be measured in the open set position, from the inside of the main trap jaws including jaw modifications or add-ons.

(1) Measurement of foot hold traps shall be made perpendicular to the frame at the widest location parallel with the dog.

(2) Measurement of foot hold traps without dogs shall be made perpendicular to the frame at the widest location parallel with the pan shank.

(3) Body gripping traps shall be measured from the inside of the main jaw at the trigger assembly to the inside of the opposing jaw across the entrance window.

(4) Measurement of foot-encapsulating traps with round or oblong openings shall be made across the opening at the widest location. Measurement of foot-encapsulating traps with square or rectangular openings shall be made along the longest side of the opening.

(O) It shall be lawful for persons to take coyotes without a fur taker permit.

(P) All definitions set forth in rule 1501:31-1-02 of the Administrative Code shall apply to this rule.