



GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

WALTER RABON
COMMISSIONER

LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

Serving Since 1911

CHRIS HODGE
COLONEL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator Applicants

FROM: Special Permit Unit

SUBJECT: Permit for Handling Nuisance Wildlife

A Nuisance Wildlife Control permit, when issued by the Law Enforcement Division, authorizes the permittee to live-trap, possess, transport, and release in suitable habitat certain nuisance wildlife. In addition, the permittee is authorized, at their discretion, to euthanize certain nuisance animals and to transport non-endangered injured, sick, or orphaned wildlife to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator. With this authority comes the responsibility of handling this activity in a professional, humane manner beyond the view of the public.

To apply for an Individual Nuisance Wildlife Control permit, you must first take an exam and score at a minimum of 80 points on the Nuisance Wildlife Control Exam administered by the Department of Natural Resources.

Persons intending to take the examination should familiarize themselves with this application packet, (*page 4 being very important*), along with applicable laws and regulations including Georgia Trapping regulations as enclosed. If a passing score is not made on the exam, it may be taken again after 15 days.

The exam shall be taken, **with a previous appointment**, at the DNR Law Enforcement Headquarters / Special Permit Unit office in Social Circle or If you live some distance from Social Circle, it is possible to arrange to take the exam at one of our Game Management Region offices, see this link Locations <https://georgiawildlife.com/about/contact>

If you have any questions, please call the Special Permit Unit at (770)918-6408.

Once you have completed and passed the Nuisance wildlife exam, a certification will be added to your Go outdoors account by the Special Permit Unit. You can then purchase both the Commercial Trapping license and Nuisance Wildlife Control permit online.



*If you have the DNR App on your phones, make sure to sync your permits and they will appear. If you don't have the app it's worth the download.
iPhone and Android users have great tools for the woods and on the water*

It is important to remember that you **may not** conduct Nuisance Wildlife Control activities until you have obtained a permit. Conducting nuisance wildlife control activities without said permit would be a violation of Georgia law and could result in a citation and/or denial of a Nuisance Wildlife Control Permit.

Please be aware If your wildlife control company includes structural pest control inspection and/or control pests such as mice, rats, or insects, please contact the Georgia Department of Agriculture at (404) 656-3641 or www.agr.georgia.gov/structural

Rev 3/2026/jrh

FACT SHEET: QUALIFYING EXAMINATION FOR A NUISANCE WILDLIFE CONTROL PERMIT

PURPOSE

The examination is designed to determine the applicant's knowledge of wildlife damage identification, trapping regulations, trapping procedures, and general information.

LEGAL REQUIREMENT

Persons desiring to obtain a Nuisance Wildlife Control Permit are required to answer correctly at least 80 percent of the questions on a supervised examination.

ADMINISTERING AGENCY

Department of Natural Resources personnel or their representatives will administer the examination.

CONTENT

The examination consists of 50 questions relating to trapping regulations, damage identification, trapping procedures, and general/miscellaneous information. Questions are multiple choice, true/false, and fill in the blank.

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Number of Questions</u>
Trapping Regulations	16
Damage Identification	8
Trapping Procedures	19
General/Miscellaneous	7

Persons intending to take the examination should review the animal damage control literature and applicable regulations. Recommended literature includes:

- Prevention and Control of Wildlife Damage, Volume I and II, 1994. US Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service-Animal Damage Control, Washington, DC. Editors: Scott E. Hygnstrom, Robert M. Timm, Gary E. Larson. Available at <https://icwdm.org/about-us/>
- Georgia Trapping Rules and Regulations
http://gadnrle.org/sites/default/files/le/pdf/Special-Permits/Georgia_Trapping_Regulations.pdf
- Standard Conditions set forth on the Nuisance Wildlife Control Permit (see page 6 of application)
- Georgia Rabies Control Manual is Published by the Georgia Department of Public Health:
• <https://dph.georgia.gov/document/publication/georgia-rabies-manual-updated-april-2018/download>
- American Veterinary Medical Association on Euthanasia. Approved methods for euthanasia are listed by the American Veterinary Medical association. <https://www.avma.org/KB/Policies/Documents/euthanasia.pdf>

FAILURE TO PASS

An applicant who does not make a passing score on the examination may retake the examination after a 15-day period.

Nuisance Wildlife Control Permittees are authorized to trap non –endangered nuisance wildlife at times outside the legal trapping season as specified in the schedule below.

Authorized trapping methods are listed below. Any other method of trapping or removal not authorized in the schedule below must be specifically approved in writing by DNR Special Permit Unit.

NUISANCE WILDLIFE CONTROL PERMIT STANDARD CONDITIONS

Species	Methods *
Armadillo	All lawful methods
Beaver	All lawful methods
Coyote	All lawful methods
Groundhog	All lawful methods
Nutria	All lawful methods
Rats /Mice	All lawful methods
Snake - Venomous only	All lawful methods
Raccoon	All lawful methods
Opossum	All lawful methods
Fox - Red & Gray	Standard Trapping Regulations
Skunks	Standard Trapping Regulations
Otter	Standard Trapping Regulations
Muskrat	Standard Trapping Regulations
Bobcat	Standard Trapping Regulations
Mink	Standard Trapping Regulations
Squirrel - Gray & Flying	Box / cage trap or exclusion
Chipmunk	Live trap or snap trap
Mole / Vole	Live trap or snap trap
Snakes - Nonvenomous only	Live catch only - hand
Alligators (less than 4 feet in length only)	Live catch only - hand
Alligators (4 feet or longer in length)	Not authorized
Bats:	Exclusion Only. Lethal removal of bats from any location is not authorized. It is advisable to avoid excluding bats from April 1 – July 31 unless it can reasonably be determined that no flightless young are present, either by direct inspection of the roost site or by inspection of emerging females for indications of lactation. Removal of mother/young pairs shall be by gloved hand and the pair shall be placed in a protected site outside where they have the best chance of survival. Exclusion shall be done in conjunction with repairs to the residence or business to prevent future occupation by bats. See the following link for bat information https://georgiawildlife.com/ExcludingBatsFromYourHouse
Migratory Birds	Per U.S. Fish and Wildlife Permit only

* The use of chemicals or poisons is not authorized.

* Snares are not a legal method except for beavers when set in water or within 10 feet of waters edge.

* Rabies Vector Species cannot be relocated.

For methods "Box / cage trap or exclusion" or "Live catch only - hand", animals are to be relocated into suitable habitat and released unharmed.

NUISANCE WILDLIFE CONTROL PERMIT STANDARD CONDITIONS

1. Georgia Nuisance Wildlife Control permittees must maintain a valid Georgia trapping license at all times for this permit to remain valid: to O.C.G.A. § 27-3-60. Commercial trapping license and Nuisance Wildlife control permit must be renewed annually. Permits and licenses expire on March 31st of each year.

2. Permittee is required to inspect traps and remove any captured animals at least once every 24 hours.

3. Euthanasia of trapped animals that are non-releasable shall be in accordance with Georgia law as specified in OCGA § 27-3-63 or by an alternative method as specified in the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) guidelines for euthanasia.

4. The permittee shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding the capture, handling, and release of wildlife and with all local ordinances, including disposal of dead animals.

5. The permittee may not sell any animals, or parts thereof, taken under this permit; provided however, that the permittee may sell furbearers or parts thereof trapped during the legal trapping season and sold in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

6. Migratory Birds may be trapped with authorization from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Georgia DNR cannot authorize the taking of woodpeckers, hawks, owls, vultures, endangered species, or any other federally regulated wildlife.

7. The permittee is authorized to possess nuisance wildlife for less than 72 hours, for transportation and release into suitable habitat with permission from the landowner: Wildlife is not allowed to be released on state property. The permittee will release apparently healthy animals into areas remote enough that nuisance problems are unlikely to recur.

EXCEPT: If a trapped nuisance animal is a Rabies Vector Species (RVS) (Raccoon, Skunk, Bobcat, Fox, and Coyote), the permittee will determine whether it has scratched, bitten, or had similar contact with any person or domestic mammal where the complaint originated. If such contact has occurred, the permittee will call the county animal shelter or health department and will comply with instructions for having the animal tested for rabies. If such contact has not occurred, the permittee shall euthanize and dispose of said animal(s).

8. If the nuisance animal is not a Rabies Vector Species (RVS), the permittee will dispose of the animal as allowed. If the animal has bitten, scratched, or had similar contact with a person, the permittee may, at his discretion, contact the Department of Human Resources at (404) 244-2200 for guidance.

9. The permittee must maintain records of all wildlife trapped to include: county, species, number, disposition, and relocation site. The permittee must submit an annual report of such records by January 31 of the next year to DNR Special Permit Unit in Social Circle Georgia.

10. At any time when nuisance animals with dependent young are encountered, a permittee is required to make all reasonable efforts to remove young with the adult(s).

11. Permittee must meet the specifications required by the Game and Fish Code (O.C.G.A. § 27-5-6) for the humane handling, care, confinement, and transportation of animals.

12. The permittee is authorized to transport injured, sick, or orphaned wildlife other than Rabies Vector Species to persons with rehabilitation permits from the department. If the permittee determines an injured, sick, or orphaned animal is beyond the point of rehabilitation or is a danger to people or domestic animals, the permittee may euthanize the animal.

13. Permittee is not authorized to handle nuisance bears, deer, turkeys, or migratory waterfowl unless specified. Complaints regarding these species should be forwarded promptly to the nearest DNR office or the State Operations Center (1-800-241-4113).

14. Permittee is responsible for promptly notifying the department of any changes in address or telephone number.

15. Permit may be suspended or revoked upon any violation of the Game and Fish Code or these Standard Conditions or upon receiving any three valid complaints during any 12-month period.

If your wildlife control company includes structural pest control inspection and/or control pests such as mice, rats, or insects, please contact the Georgia Department of Agriculture at (404) 656-3641 or www.agr.georgia.gov/structural

SOME APPLICABLE GEORGIA LAWS AND RULES and REGULATIONS (2008)

§ 27-1-2. Definitions

As used in this title, the term:

(1.1) "Alligator" means *Alligator mississippiensis*, commonly known as the American alligator.

(9) "Business premises" means any place of business operation including, but not limited to, offices, sheds, warehouses, vessels, boats, houses, ponds, and other such locations where commercial activity takes place and specifically includes the equipment used in conducting such activity.

(19) "Commercial trapper" means a person who traps on any land other than that belonging to himself or to his immediate family.

(31) "Fur-bearing animals" means the following animals: mink, otter, raccoon, fox, opossum, muskrat, skunk, bobcat, and weasel.

(32) "Fur dealer" means a person who purchases or sells raw undressed hides, furs, pelts, or skins of fur-bearing animals and alligator hides or alligator products, excluding alligator meat; provided, however, those persons engaged in wholesale or retail furrier operations, that is, those who engage in the manufacture or production of finished fur or alligator products, shall not be fur dealers for purposes of this title.

(33) "Fur dealer's agent" means any person who represents the owner of or a dealer in furs, alligator hides, or alligator products for the purpose of selling such furs, alligator hides, or alligator products.

(34) "Game animals" means the following animals: bear, bobcat, deer, fox, opossum, rabbit, raccoon, sea turtles and their eggs, squirrel, cougar (*Felis concolor*), and all members of the families Alligatoridae and Crocodylidae.

(35) "Game birds" means the following birds: turkey, quail, grouse, and all migratory game birds.

(37) "Game species" means all game animals, game birds, and game fish.

(59) "Rats and mice" means any gnawing mammal of the class Mammalia, the subclass Theria, the order Rodentia, and either the family Muridae or the family Cricetidae and the genera *Peromyscus*, *Sigmodon*, *Oryzomys*, or *Reithrodontomys*.

(60) "Resident" means any citizens of the United States who has been domiciled within the State of Georgia for a period of at least three months. For purposes of issuing or procuring the noncommercial hunting and fishing licenses required by this title, residents shall include full-time military personnel on active duty who list Georgia as their home of record in their official military files or who are stationed at a military base located in Georgia and the dependents of such military personnel.

(71) "Taking" means killing, capturing, destroying, catching, or seizing.

(72) "Trapping" means taking, killing, or capturing wildlife with traps. This term also includes all lesser acts such as placing, setting, or staking such traps, whether such acts result in taking or not, and attempting to take and assisting any person in taking or attempting to take wildlife with traps.

(77) "Wildlife" means any vertebrate or invertebrate animal life indigenous to this state or any species introduced or specified by the board and includes fish, except domestic fish produced by aquaculturists registered under Code Section 27-4-255, mammals, birds, fish, amphibians, reptiles, crustaceans, and mollusks or any part thereof.

§ 27-1-28. Taking of nongame species

(a) Except as otherwise provided by law, rule, or regulation, it shall be unlawful to hunt, trap, fish, take, possess, or transport any nongame species of wildlife, except that the following species may be taken by any method except those specifically prohibited by law or regulation:

- (1) Rats;
- (2) Mice;
- (3) Coyotes;
- (4) Armadillos;
- (5) Groundhogs;
- (6) Beaver;
- (7) Fresh-water turtles;
- (8) Poisonous snakes;
- (9) Frogs;
- (10) Spring lizards;
- (11) Fiddler crabs;
- (12) Fresh-water crayfish;
- (13) Fresh-water mussels; and
- (14) Nutria.

(b) The nongame species enumerated in subsection (a) of this Code section may be taken by any method except those specifically prohibited by law or regulation.

(c) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to authorize the taking of any species which is protected under the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, P.L. 93-205, as amended, or under any state law which has as its purpose the protection of endangered or threatened species.

§ 27-1-30. Disturbing or destroying wildlife habitats

Except as otherwise provided by law or regulation, it shall be unlawful to disturb, mutilate, or destroy the dens, holes, or homes of any wildlife; to blind wildlife with lights; or to use explosives, chemicals, electrical or mechanical devices, or smokers of any kind in order to drive such wildlife out of such habitats, provided that this Code section shall not apply to poisonous snakes.

§ 27-1-32. Hiring of another to take wildlife contrary to law

It shall be unlawful for any person to hire another to take or possess wildlife in violation of the wildlife laws, rules, and regulations.

§ 27-2-14. (For effective date, see note) Liberation-of-wildlife and liberation-of-domestic fish permits

It shall be unlawful for any person to liberate any wildlife within this state or to liberate domestic fish except into private ponds except under permit from the department; provided, however, that pen raised quail may be released for purposes of training pointing, flushing, and retrieving dogs.

§ 27-2-22.1. Fox trapping and selling

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to trap and sell live fox without first procuring a commercial trapping license provided for in Code Section 27-2-23. Notwithstanding any other provision of this title to the contrary, live fox may be taken from the wild only during trapping season and may be sold only to licensed commercial fox hunting preserves or licensed commercial fox breeders. Foxes may be held during open trapping season for up to five days until sold but must be sold or dispatched within five days after the close of trapping season. Any person in possession of a live fox must comply with the provisions of Code Section 27-5-6.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to purchase a live fox unless the person selling such game animal has a valid commercial trapping license and unless the person purchasing such animal has a valid license provided for in this Code section.

§ 27-2-31. Wildlife control permits

(a) The department is authorized to issue wildlife control permits authorizing the permittee to trap, transport and release, or kill wildlife and feral hogs where such action is otherwise prohibited by law or regulation:

(1) When the department determines that there is a substantial likelihood the presence of such wildlife or feral hogs will endanger or cause injury to persons or will destroy or damage agricultural crops, domestic animals, buildings, structures, or other personal property;

(2) For the control of white-tailed deer on airport property; provided, however, that permits shall be issued under this paragraph for purposes of public safety, and the control of white-tailed deer for other purposes and the removal of black bear shall be as provided in Code Sections 27-2-18 and 27-3-21, respectively;

(3) For fur-bearing animals, as defined in paragraph (31) of Code Section 27-1-2, to implement a bona fide wildlife management plan that has been approved by the department; and

(4) For feral hogs, provided that all permitted activities must comply with all rules and regulations of the Georgia Department of Agriculture.

(b) In issuing a wildlife control permit, the department shall prescribe the method, means, species, numbers, time limits, location, and any other conditions it deems necessary to ensure the continued viability of the wildlife population involved and to ensure that the public safety and interest are not compromised.

(c) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to authorize the taking of any species which is protected by the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, Public Law 93-205, as amended, or under any state law or regulation which has as its purpose the protection of endangered or threatened species.

§ 27-3-60. Required commercial trapping license

- (a) It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in business as a trapper unless that person or his agent has a current valid commercial trapping license issued by the department, as provided in Code Section 27-2-23.
- (b) A landowner or a member of his immediate family desiring to trap on the landowner's private property may obtain a license for such purpose annually from the department at no charge.
- (c) Any person violating any provision of this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

§ 27-3-61. Nonresident commercial trapping license

- (a) Upon application for a nonresident commercial trapping license, the person making such application must do one of the following:
- (1) Post a cash forfeiture bond in the form prescribed by the board in favor of the State of Georgia in the amount of \$2,500.00, conditioned upon faithful compliance with the laws of this state and regulations of the board governing trappers and trapping; or
 - (2) File with the commissioner a forfeiture bond in the form prescribed by the board executed by a bonding, surety, or insurance company licensed to do business in this state in favor of the state in the amount of \$2,500.00, conditioned upon faithful compliance with the laws of this state and regulations of the board governing trappers and trapping.
- (b) The term of the bond provided for in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a) of this Code section shall be for one year and shall correspond to the period of the license. The commissioner shall have the right to recover on the bond for the breach of its conditions whenever the trapper violates the laws of this state governing trappers or trapping or any rule or regulation promulgated by the board pursuant thereto, as follows:
- (1) For the first violation, \$500.00;
 - (2) For the second violation within a two-year period of time of any prior violation, \$1,000.00;
 - (3) For the third violation within a two-year period of time of any prior violation, \$2,500.00;
 - (4) For each subsequent violation within a two-year period of time of any prior violation, \$2,500.00.
- (c) Every breach or violation shall carry over to all succeeding bonds filed under this Code section. The aggregate liability shall not exceed the amount of the bond; however, in the event that the total amount of any bond is forfeited, the nonresident commercial trapping license shall be suspended until a new bond is filed covering the remainder of the period of the license; and it shall be unlawful and punishable under Code Section 27-3-60 for such trapper to trap at any time during the suspension of such license.

§ 27-3-62. Open seasons

- (a) Except as otherwise specifically provided in this Code section, it shall be unlawful to trap any wildlife in this state between March 1 and November 19.
- (b) It shall be unlawful to trap any wildlife during the period between November 20 and February 29, except as otherwise provided in this Code section and except that it shall not be unlawful to trap a fur-bearing animal during that period or a portion thereof if that period or portion thereof is designated by the board as an open trapping season for such fur-bearing animal.
- (c) In accordance with subsection (b) of this Code section and as may be appropriate in accordance with sound wildlife

management principles, the board is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations establishing open seasons for the trapping of fur-bearing animals on a state-wide, regional, or local basis.

(d) Notwithstanding subsection (a) or (b) of this Code section, it shall be lawful to trap beaver, rats, and mice at any time during the year. It shall also be lawful for any person to set steel traps within 200 yards of the residence or dwelling of any such person for the protection of livestock, ratites, poultry, or other fowl or domestic animals from any predatory bird or animal. (e) Any person who violates any provision of this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

§ 27-3-63. General offenses and penalties

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to:

(1) Trap any wildlife upon the right of way of any public road or highway of this state; provided, however, that this paragraph shall not apply to any person licensed as required by Code Section 27-3-60 who traps beaver upon the right of way of any state highway, county road, or municipal street as an authorized agent, employee, or contractor of the state, county, or municipality for the purpose of preventing, reducing, or stopping damage to such highway, road, or street resulting from beaver activity;

(2) Set, place, or bait any trap for the purpose of taking any wildlife upon the land or in the waters adjoining the land of any other person, except during the open trapping season for such wildlife, and then only after obtaining the written consent of the owner of the land, which written consent shall be carried upon the trapper's person while engaged in trapping;

(3) Trap any wildlife without inspecting the traps used for such purpose at least once during each 24 hour period and removing from the traps any wildlife caught therein;

(4) Trap any wildlife by the use of any trap or other device which is not legibly etched, stamped, or tagged by affixing a stamped metal tag showing the owner's permanent trapper's identification number as provided by the department or the owner's name. In the event that a trap or other device etched or stamped with the owner's permanent trapper's identification number or name is being used in the field by another, such trap or device must have attached to it a stamped metal tag with the user's permanent trapper's identification number or name. Any trap or other device found in use in the field which is not etched, stamped, or tagged as required by this paragraph may be confiscated and destroyed by the department through its officers and conservation rangers;

(5) Ship or otherwise remove or cause to be removed from this state any raw or undressed hide, fur, pelt, or skin of any fur-bearing animal without first making a report to the department of the removal on forms to be furnished by the department for such purpose;

(6) Fail to carry a weapon of .22 caliber rimfire while tending traps and to fail to use such weapon to dispatch any fur-bearing animal found in a trap, which animal is to be taken by the person;

(7) Fail to carry a choke stick or similar device while tending traps, which device shall be used for releasing domestic animals;

(8) Set on land any trap with a jaw opening larger than 5 3/4 inches, provided that nothing in this Code section shall be construed to restrict the type of trap which may be used in water;

(9) Sell the fur, hide, or pelt of any domestic dog or cat caught by a trap;

(10) Sell the raw, undressed fur, hide, skin, or pelt of any fur-bearing animal unless the person has a current valid commercial trapping license or fur dealer license; or

(11) Set any body-gripping trap (as opposed to a leg-hold trap) of a size in excess of 9 1/2 inches square except in water or on land within ten feet of water, including swamps, marshes, and tidal areas.

(b) Any person who violates subsection (a) of this Code section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished as for a misdemeanor, subject to a minimum punishment as follows:

(1) For the first offense, the offender shall be fined not less than \$100.00, except that this minimum fine shall not apply to the offender if he is 17 years of age or younger;

(2) For a second offense within a two-year period after the first offense, the offender shall be fined not less than \$300.00; or

(3) For a third offense and for each subsequent offense within a two-year period after the first offense, the offender shall be fined not less than \$750.00.

§ 27-3-65. Removal of trap or of wildlife from trap owned by another person; possession of wildlife removed from trap of another person

It shall be unlawful for any person to remove a legally set trap, except for the owner of the land on which the trap is set, or to remove any lawfully trapped wildlife from any legally set trap or to possess any wildlife so removed from such a trap without the permission of the owner of the trap.

§ 27-3-68. Confiscation and disposal of unlawful devices

It shall be the duty of conservation rangers to confiscate any trap, pitfall, deadfall, scaffold, catch, snare, net, salt lick, blind pig, baited hook, or other similar device used in violation of the wildlife laws, rules, and regulations and to dispose of same as directed by the commissioner.

391-4-2-.12 Trapping.

(1) The trapping season for raccoon, mink, otter, fox, opossum, muskrat, skunk, bobcat and weasel is December 1 through last day of February.

(2) There is no closed season on trapping of beaver and coyotes in the State of Georgia.

(3) Within thirty (30) days after the close of trapping season, all trappers must report in writing the number of furs, hides or pelts which have been taken during the open season. Such reports may be made to any Game Management Section office. Completion of the annual trapping survey distributed by the Department shall meet the reporting requirements herein.

(4) All bobcats and otters trapped in Georgia and exported out of Georgia must be tagged with a Federal Export Tag. The tag must be attached by State personnel no later than ten (10) days after the close of the trapping season.

(5) Snares may be used for trapping beaver provided that snares are set in water or on land within ten (10) feet of water, including swamps, marshes, and tidal areas. All snares must be marked with the trapper's name or identification number.

391-4-2-.16 Possession of Non-game Non protected Wildlife. Amended.

It shall be unlawful to possess live coyotes, armadillos, groundhogs, and beaver except as provided in O.C.G.A. 27-2-12, 27-2-13, and 27-2-22. Coyotes may be held live in accordance with the same provisions for live fox as provided in O.C.G.A. 27-2-22.1, except coyotes trapped for sale to commercial fox hunting preserves may be held at any time for up to five days until sold.