

Chapter IV

Possession, Importation and Sale

4.1 Possession of animals; duty to retrieve game animals; exceptions.

Sec. 4.1 A person may possess any animal or parts of any animal, from this state, or from outside of this state, whether living or dead, only as provided by this section:

- (1) Game lawfully taken, acquired, and transported may be possessed by any person.
- (2) Live game taken from the wild shall not be possessed. Wounded game, reduced to possession, shall be immediately killed and included in the daily limit. A person shall not kill or wound any game animal without making a reasonable attempt to retrieve the animal and include it in their daily limit.
- (3) Dead game lawfully taken in another state, territory, or country, and lawfully imported into this state, may be possessed by any person.
- (4) Game lawfully taken may be possessed afield, or in or upon a motorized vehicle, if the identification of species and sex is readily identifiable as provided by section 40109 of the natural resources and environmental protection act, 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.40109. Waterfowl may be transported or possessed only in accordance with sections 3.403 to 3.406 of this order. For the purposes of identification under section 40109, the species and sex of a butchered or processed deer, bear, or elk shall be considered readily identifiable if the carcass or parts thereof are accompanied by the head of the animal with the validated tag or seal as required for the species by this order.
- (5) Animals, dead or alive, and parts thereof may be possessed by educational institutions, public agencies, and public zoological gardens. A qualified person may obtain a permit from the department to possess a live animal for expressed purpose of ultimately returning the sick or injured animal to the wild.
- (6) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, live game or protected species, and any other animals which closely resemble game or protected species, and can reasonably be confused with game or protected species as determined by the department, which have been lawfully acquired from within this state, or lawfully imported, may be possessed if the person first applies for and has been issued 1 or more of the following licenses or permits specifically authorizing the species to be possessed by that person:
 - (a) A shooting preserve license.
 - (b) A permit to hold game in captivity.
 - (c) A federally recognized falconry permit.
 - (d) A federal raptor propagation permit, except that the possession of a threatened or endangered species must be in compliance with part 365, endangered species protection, of the natural resources and environmental protection act, 1994 PA 451. A person shall not possess any species under the authority of a federal raptor propagation permit unless that species may be legally used for falconry in this state.
 - (e) A federal special purpose education permit or state scientific collector's permit.
- (7) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the possession of a hawk, owl, or eagle, or parts thereof, by an American Indian for ceremonial or religious purposes or for the preservation of tribal customs and heritage. For the purposes of this section, proof of American Indian lineage shall be a Bureau of Indian Affairs countersigned identification card or a tribal identification card issued by a tribe recognized by the United States government.
- (8) A licensed taxidermist may possess lawfully acquired dead game and protected animals only under the following conditions:

(a) Game and protected animals must be tagged with a taxidermist specimen identification tag supplied by the department and the information requested on the tag must be completely and legibly recorded. Harvest reporting information shall be recorded as instructed by the department.

(b) A copy of the taxidermist specimen identification tag shall be maintained by the taxidermist on the premises for inspection by a conservation officer or a law enforcement officer for 1 year following disposal of any specimen.

(c) Receipt of any cervid carcass or parts thereof, other than deboned meat, quarters or other parts of a cervid that do not have any part of the spinal column or head attached, antlers, antlers attached to a skull or skull cap cleaned of all brain and muscle tissue, hides, and upper canine teeth originating from another state or province must be reported to the department, within the business hours of the next 72 hours of receipt unless at least one of the following conditions is met:

(i) The carcass or parts thereof is affixed with a department-issued CWD survey tag.

(ii) The hunter presents a portion of the department-issued CWD survey tag for that animal.

(9) A person shall not possess the carcass or parts thereof, of a cervid originating from another state or province except for the following:

(a) Deboned meat, quarters or other parts of a cervid that do not have any part of the spinal column or head attached, antlers, antlers attached to a skull cap cleaned of all brain and muscle tissue, hides, and upper canine teeth.

(b) A finished taxidermist mount.

(c) Tissues imported for use by a diagnostic or research laboratory.

(10) A person may possess antlers that have been shed by a cervid. "Shed" means to cast off as part of a natural process.

(11) An individual is exempt from obtaining a permit or license under this section for captive sourced:

(a) Pheasants (*phasianus colchicus*) if there are 12 or fewer in number.

(b) Quail if there are 12 or fewer in number.

(c) Hungarian partridge if there are 12 or fewer in number.

History: Eff. Mar 31, 1989; Am. 22, 1989, Eff. Jan 1, 1990; Am. 14, 1990, Eff. Aug 1, 1990; Am. 3, 1996, Eff. Apr 11, 1996; Am. 1, 1997, Eff. May 1, 1997; Am. 8, 1999, Eff. Sep 1, 1999; Am. 16, 2008, Eff. Oct 10, 2008; Am. 15, 2010, Eff. Aug. 12, 2010; Am. 8, 2012, Eff. Jun 15, 2012.; Am. Interim Order 1, 2015, Eff. May 26, 2015; Am. 9, 2015, Eff. Aug. 14, 2015; Am. 4, 2017, Eff. June 9, 2017; Interim Order 1 of 2017, Eff. Oct. 4, 2017; Am. 12, 2018, Eff. Aug. 10, 2018; Am. 7, 2019, Eff. July 12, 2019. Am. 6, 2020; Eff. July 17, 2020; Am. 4, 2022, Eff. June 10, 2022.

4.2 Importation.

Sec. 4.2 A person may import any animal, whether living or dead, or parts of any animal, into this state only as provided in this section:

(1) Dead bear or wild turkey, and parts thereof, lawfully taken or purchased in another state, territory, or country, and lawfully exported from that state, territory, or country, may be imported into this state if the bear or turkey is clearly and permanently tagged as to the state, territory, or country of origin. A person causing a dead animal or parts thereof to be imported shall maintain documentation of the lawful taking, purchase, and/or importation of the animal until the animal is consumed, or if prepared as a trophy, the documentation must remain with the trophy.

(2) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, live game or protected animals, lawfully taken or acquired in another state, territory, or country, and lawfully exported from that state, territory, or country, may be imported into this state if the person causing the game or protected animal to be imported complies with sections 5.2 and 5.5 of this order and has first applied for and been issued one or more of the following licenses or permits specifically authorizing possession of the species being imported:

(a) A shooting preserve license.

(b) A permit to hold game in captivity.

(c) A federally recognized falconry permit.

(d) A federal raptor propagation permit, except that the importation of a threatened or endangered species must be in compliance with part 365, endangered species protection, of the natural resources and environmental protection act, 1994 PA 451. A person shall not import any species under the authority of a federal raptor propagation permit unless that species may be legally used for falconry in this state.

(e) A federal special purpose possession education permit or state scientific collector's permit.

(3) A person shall not import the carcass or parts thereof, of a cervid into this state except as described in section 4.1 (9) of this order. The carcass or parts thereof must be clearly and permanently tagged as to the state, territory, or country of origin. Documentation must be maintained of the lawful taking, purchase, and/or importation of the animal until the animal is consumed, or if prepared as a trophy, the documentation must remain with the trophy.

(4) A person who is notified by mail or other means that a carcass or parts thereof, imported into Michigan tested positive for CWD, shall report such finding within 72 hours to the Michigan department of natural resources, wildlife disease laboratory, and shall provide such information as may be requested by the laboratory.

(5) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prohibit an American Indian from importing a hawk, owl, or eagle for ceremonial or religious purposes or for the preservation of tribal customs and heritage. For the purposes of this section, proof of American Indian lineage shall be a Bureau of Indian Affairs countersigned identification card or a tribal identification card issued by a tribe recognized by the United States government.

History: Eff. Mar 31, 1989; Am. 22, 1989, Eff. Jan 1, 1990; Am. 14, 1990, Eff. Aug 1, 1990; Am. 7, 1991, Eff. Jul 1, 1991; Am. 1, 1997, Eff. May 1, 1997; Am. 16, 2008, Eff. Oct 10, 2008; Am. 15, 2010, Eff. Aug. 12, 2010; Am. 4, 2017, Eff. June 9, 2017; Am. 12, 2018, Eff. Aug. 10, 2018.

4.3 Buying and selling.

Sec. 4.3 A person may buy, offer to buy, sell, offer to sell, or exchange for anything of value animals or parts of animals only as provided in this section:

(1) The fur, hide, pelt, plumage, or skin of game, lawfully taken during the open season or raised under the authority of a permit to hold wildlife in captivity, may be sold or offered for sale by the person licensed to take the game or the person permitted to hold wildlife in captivity.

(2) The carcass and parts thereof, of fur-bearing animals lawfully taken during their open season or lawfully imported from another state, territory, or country, may be bought or sold.

(3) The antlers of deer, elk, and moose lawfully taken by a hunter or shed by the animal may be bought or sold. The skull of black bear lawfully taken may be bought or sold. The teeth, claws, flesh, bones, or internal organs of game, other than those species listed in subsection (2), shall not be bought or sold.

(4) A person engaged in the business of buying or selling animals, or parts thereof, other than tanned skins, hides, or manufactured products, may be required to obtain a fur dealer's license as required by part 425, furs, hides, and pelts, of the natural resources and environmental protection act, Act No. 451 of the Public Acts of 1994, being sections 324.42501 to 324.42507 of the Michigan Compiled Laws. A taxidermist, licensed by the department, is not required to obtain a fur dealer's license to purchase animals, or parts thereof, which may be legally bought or sold under subsections (1) to (3), part 427, breeders and dealers, of the natural resources and environmental protection act, Act No. 451 of the Public Acts of 1994, being sections 324.42701 to 324.42714 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, or part 417, private shooting preserves, of the natural resources and environmental protection act, Act No. 451 of the Public Acts of 1994, being sections 324.41701 to 324.41712 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

(5) A dealer in meats, restaurateur, private club manager, shooting preserve licensee, or the sponsor of a field dog trial may sell for food the carcasses of game listed in subsection (2), game lawfully purchased from a captive wildlife permittee, and/or game lawfully imported from another state, territory, or country provided that the seller maintains on the premises documents, receipts, bills of lading, invoices, or customs declarations which identify the number, origin, poundage, species, and cost of the game being sold. Such records must be maintained on the premises and made available to any conservation officer during normal business hours for at least 30 days following the sale of the game.

(6) A person with a permit to hold wildlife in captivity may buy and sell any animals listed on their permit in accordance with the provisions of part 427, breeders and dealers, of the natural resources and environmental protection act, Act No. 451 of the Public Acts of 1994, being sections 324.42701 to 324.42714 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, and orders issued under the authority of that part.

(7) A licensed taxidermist may sell a permanently preserved specimen other than a migratory bird if the animal was lawfully obtained and, upon transfer, is lawfully possessed by the buyer. Documentation of lawful purchase or lawful importation must be maintained by the taxidermist and transferred to the buyer upon sale. A licensed taxidermist may sell a mounted, properly marked, captive bred, migratory bird if it was lawfully obtained and is sold in compliance with federal regulations.

(8) Dead game, or parts thereof, imported from another state, territory, or country and offered for sale must be labeled or stamped as a product of that state, territory, or country and the name of the producer clearly identified in legible English on the exterior of any packaging.

(9) The state will allow the buying and selling of raptors as provided by 50 C.F.R. 21.85. No person shall purchase, sell or barter any raptor eggs, any raptors taken from the wild, any raptor semen collected from the wild, or any raptors hatched from eggs taken from the wild.

History: Eff. Mar 31, 1989; Am. 22, 1989, Eff. Jan 1, 1990; Am. 14, 1990, Eff. Aug 1, 1990; Am. 2, 1992, Eff. Jul 1, 1992; Am. 1, 1997, Eff. May 1, 1997; Am. 8, 2012, Eff. Jun 15, 2012; Am. 2, 2022; Eff. Mar. 11, 2022.

4.4 Commercial processing and storage; records required; maintenance and inspection; exceptions.

Sec. 4.4 (1) The owner, operator, or agent of any commercial processing operation, refrigeration plant, or frozen food locker plant, shall obtain a free permit from the department and maintain records of all wild animals accepted for processing or storage for 90 days following receipt of the animal. Such records shall include the name and address of the owner of the animal, the date accepted, the number of the license or permit authorizing possession, and harvest reporting information as instructed by the department. These records shall be maintained on the premises and be available for inspection by a conservation officer or a law enforcement officer at any reasonable time.

(2) A commercial processing operation that receives a carcass or parts thereof, other than deboned meat, quarters or other parts of a cervid that do not have any part of the spinal column or head attached, antlers, antlers attached to a skull or skull cap cleaned of all brain and muscle tissue, hides, and upper canine teeth, from a cervid which originated from another state or a province shall report such acquisition to the Michigan department of natural resources, wildlife disease laboratory, within 72 hours.

History: Am. 2, 1991, Eff. Jun 1, 1991; Am. 9, 2009, Eff. Jun 4, 2009; Am. 1, 2014, Eff. Jan. 10, 2014; Am. 16, 2014, Eff. Dec. 12, 2014; Am. Interim Order 1, 2015, Eff. May 26, 2015; Am. 9, 2015, Eff. Aug. 14, 2015; Am. 7, 2016, Eff. May 13, 2016; Am. 4, 2017, Eff. June 9, 2017; Am. Interim Order 1 of 2017, Eff. Oct. 4, 2017; Am. 12, 2018, Eff. Aug. 10, 2018; Am. 7, 2019, Eff. July 12, 2019.; Am. 6, 2020; Eff. July 17, 2020; Am. 4, 2022; Eff. June 10, 2022.

4.5 Wild animal killed by motor vehicle; possession; permit; issuance, disposal.

Sec. 4.5 An individual may possess a wild animal killed by collision with a motor vehicle, or so injured that it must be euthanized as allowed under law, only as provided for by the following: (1) For purposes of this section "nongame" means all wild birds and wild mammals not defined as game by Part 401, wildlife conservation, 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.40103(1).

(2) Nongame mammals killed by collision with a motor vehicle, except for mammals protected by section 9.3 of this order and by Part 365 endangered species protection, 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.36503, may be possessed by an individual at any time without a permit. Mammals protected by the endangered species protection act may be possessed only in compliance with Part 365.

(3) Nongame birds killed by collision with a motor vehicle, except for house (English) sparrows, European starlings, feral pigeons, or endangered or threatened species, may be possessed pursuant to section 5.21 of this order. House (English) sparrows, European starlings, or feral pigeons may be possessed by an individual at any time without a permit. Protected birds may be possessed only in compliance with Part 365, endangered species protection, 1994 PA 451.

(4) An individual may possess game as defined MCL 324.40103, other than badger, bobcat, brant, coot, crow, cub bear, duck, elk, fisher, Florida gallinule, geese, marten, moose, otter, snipe, sora rail, spotted fawn deer, Virginia rail, wild turkey, wolf, and woodcock under the following conditions:

(a) For the purposes of this section, the driver of the motor vehicle has first priority to take possession of a wild animal killed by a collision with a motor vehicle.

(b) A spotted fawn, cub bear, migratory game bird, and all game animals listed in subsection (4), except deer killed by a motor vehicle collision may only be possessed pursuant to section 5.21 of this order.

(c) A deer may only be possessed under the following:

(i) The individual obtains a permit from the department or by a police officer investigating the motor vehicle collision;

(ii) The individual notifies the department or a local law enforcement agency of his or her intent to maintain possession of the deer under subsection (4); or,

(iii) If the individual is the driver of the motor vehicle involved in the collision and as a result of that collision is calling 9-1-1 to report the collision, the individual must state his or her intent to maintain possession of the deer under subsection (4) pursuant to 2014 PA 255, MCL 324.40115; and,

(iv) The individual shall not possess the carcass or parts thereof, of the animal outside of the county where the animal was killed by collision with a motor vehicle except for deboned meat, quarters or other parts of a cervid that do not have any part of the spinal column or head attached, antlers, antlers attached to a skull or skull cap cleaned of all brain and muscle tissue, hides, upper canine teeth, or a finished taxidermist mount as part of the department's efforts to respond to and manage CWD in the state.

(d) An individual in possession of beaver, coyote, fox, mink, muskrat, opossum, raccoon, skunk, weasel, or small game under subsection (4) shall prepare and maintain a written record as described by 2014 PA 255, MCL 324.40115 until the individual obtains a permit from the department or until the game and its parts are consumed, composted, or no longer possessed by any individual.

(e) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (4)(b) and (c), an individual in possession of a deer killed by collision with a motor vehicle under subsection (4), or so injured that it must be euthanized, shall do one of the following:

(i) Obtain a permit from the department or by a police or peace officer investigating the motor vehicle collision;

(ii) Notify the department or a local law enforcement agency of his or her intent to maintain possession of the deer under subsection (4); or,

(iii) If the individual is the driver of the motor vehicle involved in the collision and as a result of that collision is calling 9-1-1 to report the collision, the individual must state his or her intent to maintain possession of the deer under subsection (4) pursuant to 2014 PA 255, MCL 324.40115.

(5) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (4)(b), an individual in possession of a bear killed by collision with a motor vehicle under subsection (4), or so injured that it must be euthanized, shall obtain a permit from the department or a peace officer for that bear.

(6) The permit issued for the salvage of a bear may be issued by a police or peace officer investigating the motor vehicle collision upon a form prescribed by the director and all of the following apply:

(a) A person possessing a bear killed by collision with a motor vehicle shall immediately produce the bear permit upon the demand of a conservation officer or peace officer.

(b) Immediately following the issuance of a bear permit, a person possessing bear killed by collision with a motor vehicle carcass shall securely attach the permit to the carcass. The permit shall remain attached until the carcass is processed or butchered for consumption. If the carcass is used as bait, the permittee may remove the permit while the carcass is in use, but shall produce the permit upon the request of a peace officer.

(c) A permit authorized under this subsection may be issued by a department conservation officer to dispose of the carcass of a deer, pursuant to subsection (4)(b) and (c), or bear which was otherwise accidentally or unlawfully taken, or unlawfully possessed.

(7) A wild animal killed by collision with a motor vehicle from outside the state of Michigan may be kept only by an individual meeting the provisions of section 4.1 and 4.2 of this order.

History: Am. 2, 1991, Eff. Jun 1, 1991; Am. 9, 2009, Eff. Jun 4, 2009; Am. 1, 2014, Eff. Jan. 10, 2014; Am. 16, 2014, Eff. Dec. 12, 2014; Am. Interim Order 1, 2015, Eff. May 26, 2015; Am. 9, 2015, Eff. Aug. 14, 2015; Am. 7, 2016, Eff. May 13, 2016; Am. 4, 2017, Eff. June 9, 2017; Am. Interim Order 1 of 2017, Eff. Oct. 4, 2017; Am. 12, 2018, Eff. Aug. 10, 2018; Am. 7, 2019, Eff. July 12, 2019.