



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON DOG TRAINING

GENERAL DOG TRAINING

Q What is dog training?

A The Wildlife Conservation Order Chapter 14.1 defines “dog training” as to chase or locate game with dogs outside of the open season for that game.

Q What game can I train my dog on in Michigan?

A Dogs may be trained on the same game species that can be hunted with dogs. These species include the following game animals: bear, bobcat, raccoon, opossum, fox, coyote, rabbit, hare, squirrel, duck, geese, coot, Florida gallinule, pheasant, quail, Hungarian partridge, ruffed grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, wild turkey, snipe, woodcock, sora rail, and Virginia rail.

Q When can I train my dog on game in Michigan?

A Individuals may train their dogs game which can be lawfully hunted with dogs from July 8 of one year through April 15 of the following year. Persons who desire to train year-round can do so upon established dog training areas on state-owned lands, upon private game bird hunting preserves, or by acquiring a Special Dog Training Area Permit for training on private lands.

Q Can I train my dog at any hour?

A No, you can only train your dog during the established hunting hours for that game. For example, training on rabbits can only be conducted during daylight hours; training on raccoon or coyote could be conducted during both daylight and nighttime hours.

Q When dog training in Michigan do I need to have a hunting license?

A No, a hunting license is not required unless you are participating in dog training with live ammunition. Special regulations apply when chasing bear or bobcat. A bear or fur harvester license, respectively, is needed to run your dogs on bear or bobcat whether you do or do not have a firearm.

Q Can I carry a firearm during the dog training process?

A Yes, an individual may possess a shotgun or handgun while in possession of blank cartridge ammunition when training their dog.

Q If I reside in Michigan do I need to license my dog?

A Yes, for each dog 4 months of age or older you are required a dog license in your county of residence. A current rabies vaccination will be required to obtain a dog license. Contact your county officials for further information. Non-residents must provide proof of current rabies vaccination and registration for their dog.

Q May a non-resident of Michigan dog train in Michigan?

A Non-residents may train their dogs on all species for which dogs may be trained, however, training on bear, bobcat, fox, coyote, raccoon, and opossum by non-residents is restricted. Non-residents may train on these species only when either participating in an authorized field dog trial, or from April 16 through July 8 upon a permitted private dog training area.

Q May I enter private property to retrieve my dog?

A Yes, an individual may go onto private property to retrieve their dog if they do not possess a firearm and leave upon retrieving their dog. However, if a landowner or their agent requests that you leave the property, you are obligated to leave immediately. Also, if an individual has been told either verbally or in writing to stay off the property, that person may not make any future entry upon the property to retrieve a dog.

Q What is a Special Dog Training Area Permit?

A A Private Dog Training Area Permit is a no-cost permit that establishes an area for year-round dog training on private lands. This permit allows the permittee and guests to dog train during the season normally closed to training (April 16 through July 8). If you establish a Special Dog Training Area, you can release legally acquired birds and use them for dog training year-round. Hunting or the carrying or possession of firearms other than a pistol or revolver with blank cartridges at any time of year on lands described in section 42101 is unlawful. Unless otherwise permitted (Gamebird Hunting Preserve, Designated Field Trial Permit, or Private Land Field Trial Permit), game birds may not be shot except under normal hunting regulations during the open season. A base license is required when in possession of a firearm with live ammunition. For more information about the Special Dog Training Area Permit, contact the Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division - Permit Specialist at (517) 284-6210.

Q Where are the state-owned lands that are open to year-round dog training?

A Gladwin County – Sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10, T20N R2W, all within the Gladwin Forest Area of the Au Sable River State Forest and known as the **Gladwin Field Dog Trial Area**. * (This area is only open to organized field dog trials under permit. No individual training of dogs is allowed.)

Ionia County – The SE ¼ of section 32; that portion of section 33 lying S of Riverside Drive; that portion of the N ½ of section 34 lying S of Riverside Dr, T6N R7W, and the NW ¼ of the SW ¼ of section 34, T7N R7W, within the **Ionia Recreation Area**. (These areas are only open to organized field dog trials under permit. No individual training of dogs is allowed.)

Jackson County – All of sections 24 and 25, and that portion of section 36 N of Sharon Valley Rd, T3S R2E, all within the **Sharonville State Game Area**. **

Lapeer County – Sections 13 and 24 W of Five Lakes Rd, T8N R10E, all within the **Lapeer State Game Area**. **

Oakland County – That portion of section 26 lying W of Beaumont Rd; the following portions for section 35 – the S ½ lying E of Pettibone Lake Rd, that portion of the NW ¼ lying between Pettibone Lake Rd and Beaumont Rd, the S ¼ of the NE ¼, the NW ¼ of the SW ¼ of the NE ¼, and that portion of the NW ¼ of the SW ¼ lying W of the Pettibone Lake Rd; the NE ¼ of the SE ¼ of section 34; the W ½ of the SW ¼ of Section 36; T3N R7E, all within the **Highland Recreation Area**. **

Oakland County – Section 23 E of Jossman Rd, T5N R8E, within the **Holly Recreation Area**.**

*** Closed to hunting year-round, except deer may be taken during their open season on or after November 15 of each year, and beaver and otter may be trapped during their open seasons.**

**** These areas are open to year-round training by both field dog trial participants and individual dog trainers.**

Persons interested in more information regarding the designated dog training areas may contact the respective areas at the following address and telephone numbers:

Ionia Recreation Area – 2880 W David Hwy, Ionia, MI 48846; (616) 527-3750

Sharonville State Game Area – contact Waterloo Wildlife Office, Rt 3, 13578 Seymour Rd, Grass Lake, MI 49240; phone (517) 522-4097

Lapeer State Game Area – 3116 Vernor Rd, Lapeer, MI 48446; (810) 664-8355

Highland Recreation Area – 5200 Highland Rd, White Lake, MI 48383; (248) 889-3750

Holly Recreation Area – 8100 Grange Hall Rd, Holly, MI 48442; (248) 634-8811

Q Can I train my dog in a state park, state recreation area, wildlife sanctuary, or wildlife refuge?

A Those portions of the state parks and state recreation areas open to hunting are open to dog training from July 8 through April 15; however, unless specifically authorized by field dog trial permit, no shooting of birds or possession of loaded firearms is allowed while dog training in state parks or recreation areas except on lands open to hunting from September 15 through March 31. Except for hunting, dog trials or training, all dogs in a state park or recreation area are required to be on a 6-foot or

shorter leash. All state parks, wildlife refuges and wildlife sanctuaries are closed to dog training. All state parks are closed to hunting unless specifically opened by an order. We recommend contacting the park or recreation area directly for their hunting and dog training available areas.

BIRD DOG TRAINING

Q I would like to train my dog on live captive-bred birds during the closed hunting season, what are my options?

A First, there are two categories of captive birds which can be used: 1) game birds, and 2) exotic birds.

The most popular game birds used for dog training are pheasants (ring-necked, black-necked, and all “look-a-likes”), bobwhite quail, mallard ducks and Hungarian partridge. Ring-necked pheasants and black-necked pheasant “look-a-likes” include any breeds that resemble in color, size and appearance either the ring-necked or black-necked pheasant. Except for special rules on the recapture of bobwhite quail, once released, captive game birds cannot be shot or recaptured except by legal hunting during the open season for that game bird.

The most popular exotics are the chukar partridge, feral pigeon and coturnix quail. Exotics are favored by some dog trainers because they can be released and shot year-round with a base license in any area open to hunting.

Both captive game birds and exotics are available from private breeders in Michigan. For a listing of breeders in your area, contact the Michigan Association of Game Bird Breeders & Hunting Preserves, <http://michiganhuntingpreserves.com/>.

Another alternative is to contact a licensed game bird hunting preserve. Hunting preserves have an extended hunting season, from July 15 through April 30, and can allow year-round dog training and the shooting of exotics for their clients. The Michigan Association of Game Bird Breeders & Hunting Preserves, whose address, phone number and web site is listed above, can supply you with preserves that provide these services.

Q Do I need any special permit to use either captive reared game birds or exotic birds for dog training?

A This depends on whether you are using game birds or exotics and if using game birds, the number of birds you purchase:

- Exotics – No permit or other paperwork is needed to purchase exotics within Michigan.
- Game birds – No permit is needed to purchase 12 or fewer pheasants, bobwhite quail or Hungarian partridge for dog training from a Michigan breeder. If you purchase more than 12 at a time for dog training, the Michigan breeder will furnish you with a Game Bird Release Permit. Birds acquired in this manner, regardless of quantity, cannot be propagated or sold. If you have an interest in rearing your own birds for dog training purposes, contact the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division, Permit Specialist, phone 517-284-6210, for further information. Game birds acquired in Michigan must be accompanied by a shipping tag supplied by the seller. Keep the shipping tag as proof of legal ownership.

Importation – Regardless of whether you purchase game birds or exotics, any imported birds must be accompanied by an official interstate health certificate or office interstate certificate of veterinary inspection, which will be furnished by the out-of-state breeder. All gamebirds or exotic birds imported into Michigan must be certified free of pullorum by an accredited veterinarian. You are required by law to keep the interstate shipping certificates for at least 1 year as proof of legal importation.

Q Can I use a quail recall pen in Michigan?

A Yes, a quail recall pen can be used for dog training purposes if the person using the pen has on their person the shipping tag or permit for the quail.

DOG TRAINING/BIRD RELEASE ON STATE LAND

Q Can I release game birds or exotic birds on State owned land open to dog training?

A Part 427 Breeders and Dealers of the Natural Resources Environmental and Protection Act, Act 451 of 1994, indicates that game birds shall not be released on state land without written permission from the Department. It is very important that when releasing birds for training have received proper authorization. Authorization for this could be written permission or a Designated Field Trial permit.

From July 8th till April 15th you can train or run dogs on State Game Areas or Wildlife Areas and can shoot exotic birds such as pigeons, chukars, Tennessee reds, or other non-natives as long as they do not look significantly similar to Michigan game birds. Wisconsin Jumbo Quail look closely like the Michigan bobwhite and can easily be mistaken. Therefore, Wisconsin Jumbo Quail cannot be used.

During the closed dog training season (April 16th - July 7th), you cannot train on State Game Areas or Wildlife Areas. Running your dog off lead/leash also is not allowed. You can however, train and run your dogs at the Designated Field Trial Areas: Highland, Holly, Ionia, Sharonville, and Lapeer during the closed season. Persons using the state designated field trial areas to train on gamebirds without a field trial permit may only use a shotgun, pistol, and revolver with blank ammunition.

Field trials on designated field trial areas require a permit. If you need more information regarding dog training or field trials, please contact the Wildlife Division Permit Specialist at 517-284-6210.

FIELD DOG TRIALS

Q What is a field dog trial?

A A field dog trial is a trial or meet advertised as such and open to entry by persons whose dogs qualify, in which no less than four participants, with dogs, are permitted to dog train in competition or contest. Dogs must be awarded points, trophies, or other actual honors for their performance and demonstration of hunting skills.

Live birds legally possessed may be released and taken in the process of the trial when permitted. Firearms with live ammunition may be possessed during the trial, when the field dog trial permit allows the shooting of live birds. Individuals in possession of a firearm with live ammunition must have a base license for the current year.

For more information on field dog trials on State Designated Field Trial Areas, contact Barb Berta, Secretary, Michigan Field Dog Trial Association, 248-770-0164.

For more information on field dog trails on private land contact Wildlife Division Permit Specialist at 517-284-6210.

Field Trial Note: Training while shooting requires a field trial permit during the closed season. Training and shooting during the open season does not require a field trial permit. Field trial permits are not usually issued for Lapeer or Sharonville without first getting land manager approval.

BEAR AND BOBCAT DOG TRAINING

Q Can I train my dog on bear?

A Yes, if a resident of Michigan you can train your dogs on bear except from April 16 to July 8. However, it is unlawful to run dogs on bear in any area of the state not open to bear hunting.

- It shall be unlawful for any person to dog train on bear in zone 1 from September 5 through September 14.
- It shall be unlawful for any person to dog train on bear in zones 2 and 3 from 5 days prior to the first Sunday following September 15 through the first Sunday following September 15, except in the Baldwin north area where it shall be unlawful for any person to train dogs on bear 12 days prior to the first Friday following September 15 for 5 days thereafter.
- It also is unlawful to chase bears with dogs during the October archery only season in the Red Oak Bear Management Unit.

More information and specifics can also be found in the *Michigan Black Bear Digest* available in print where hunting licenses are sold and online through the DNR website.

During the training process, individuals may only train eight dogs at any one time on bear. Captive, tethered, or caged bears may not be used in the dog training process. Residents running their dogs during the open hunting season for bear or bobcat must be in possession of a valid hunting license for that species (bear or fur harvester, respectfully).

Non-residents must have in their possession a special permit to use dogs while hunting bear. No more than 10 dogs may be registered on one permit. The free permits are available by calling the Wildlife-Permit Specialist at 517-284-6210 or reitzc@michigan.gov.

Q Are there any areas closed to bobcat dog training?

A Yes, it is unlawful to train a dog on bobcat in an area of the state that is closed to bobcat hunting.

FOX DOG TRAINING

Q Can I train my dog on fox?

A Yes, if a resident of Michigan, you can train your dog on fox during the open season for dog training. Fox may also be chased from April 16 to July 8 in Zone 3, on state-owned lands with written authorization from the department. For permit application information, contact the Wildlife Division – Permit Specialist at 517-284-6210. An individual may also fox train by participation in a permitted field dog trial.

DOG TRAINING AND BIRDS

Q Can I release game birds or exotic birds on State owned land open to dog training?

A Part 427 Breeders and Dealers of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Act 451 of 1994 indicates that gamebirds shall not be released on state land without written permission from the Department. It is very important that when releasing birds for training you have received proper authorization. Authorization for this could be written permission or a Designated Field Trial permit.

From July 8th till April 15th you can train or run dogs on State Game Areas or Wildlife Areas and can shoot exotic birds such as pigeons, chukars, Tennessee reds, or other non-natives as long as they do not look significantly similar to Michigan game birds. Wisconsin Jumbo Quail look closely like the Michigan bobwhite and can easily be mistaken. Therefore, Wisconsin Jumbo Quail cannot be used.

During the closed dog training season (April 16th - July 7th), you cannot train on State Game Areas or Wildlife Areas. Running your dog off lead/leash also is not allowed. You can however, train and run your dogs at the Designated Field Trial Areas: Highland, Holly, Ionia, Sharonville, and Lapeer during the closed season. Persons using the state designated field trial areas to train on gamebirds without a field trial permit may only use a shotgun, pistol, and revolver with blank ammunition.

Field trials on designated field trial areas require a permit. If you need more information regarding dog training or field trials, please contact the Wildlife Division Permit Specialist at 517-284-6210.