

OHIO REVISED CODE: WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

The Ohio Revised code contains legislation passed by the Ohio General Assembly. Title XV of the Code includes legislation to conserve and protect Ohio's natural resources. Title XV, Chapter 1531 contains laws for the Division of Wildlife to protect and preserve Ohio's wildlife, including deer. Selected Sections and Divisions of Chapter 1531 are printed below.

Title XV, Chapter 1531, Section 1531.02.

State ownership of wild animals; prohibitions.

The ownership of and the title to all wild animals in this state, not legally confined or held by private ownership legally acquired, is in the state, which holds such title in trust for the benefit of all the people. Individual possession shall be obtained only in accordance with the Revised Code or division rules. No person at any time of the year shall take in any manner or possess any number or quantity of wild animals, except wild animals that the Revised Code or division rules permit to be taken, hunted, killed, or had in possession, and only at the time and place and in the manner that the Revised Code or division rules prescribe. No person shall buy, sell, or offer any part of wild animals for sale, or transport any part of wild animals, except as permitted by the Revised code or division rules. No person shall possess or transport a wild animal that has been taken unlawfully outside the state.

Title XV, Chapter 1531, Section 1531.04, Divisions (A) & (C)

Powers and duties of division of wildlife.

The division of wildlife, at the direction of the chief of the division, shall do all of the following:

(A) Plan, develop, and institute programs and policies based on the best available information, including biological information derived from professionally accepted practices in wildlife and fisheries management, with the approval of the director of natural resources;

(C) Enforce by proper legal action or proceeding the laws of the state and division rules for the protection, preservation, propagation, and management of wild animals and sanctuaries and refuges for the propagation of those wild animals, and adopt and carry into effect such measures as it considers necessary in the performance of its duties.

Title XV, Chapter 1531, Section 1531.08.

Regulation of domestic deer.

The division of wildlife does not have authority to regulate domestic deer, which shall be regulated as agricultural animals by the department of agriculture.

Title XV, Chapter 1531, Section 1531.13.

Wildlife officers and other law enforcement officers.

The law enforcement officers of the division of wildlife shall be known as “wildlife officers.” The chief of the division of wildlife, wildlife officers, and such other employees of the division as the chief of the division of wildlife designates, and other officers who are given like authority, shall enforce all laws pertaining to the taking, possession, protection, preservation, management, and propagation of wild animals and all division rules. They shall enforce all laws against hunting without permission of the owner or authorized agent of the land on which the hunting is done. They may arrest on view and without issuance of a warrant. They may inspect any container or package at any time except when within a building and the owner or person in charge of the building objects. The inspection shall be only for bag limits of wild animals taken in open season or for wild animals taken during the closed season, or for any kind or species of those wild animals.

A wildlife officer, sheriff, deputy sheriff, constable, or officer having a similar authority may search any place which the officer has good reason to believe contains a wild animal or any part of a wild animal taken or had in possession contrary to law or division rule, or a boat, gun, net, seine, trap, ferret, or device used in the violation, and seize any the officer finds so taken or possessed. If the owner or person in charge of the place to be searched refuses to permit the search, upon filing an affidavit in accordance with law with a court having jurisdiction of the offense and upon receiving a search warrant issued, the officer forcibly may search the place described, and if in the search the officer finds any wild animal or part of a wild animal, or any boat, gun, net, sieve, trap, ferret, or device in the possession of the owner or person in charge, contrary to this chapter or Chapter 1533 of the Revised Code or division rule, the officer shall seize it and arrest the person in whose custody or possession it was found. The wild animal or parts of a wild animal or boat, gun, net, seine, trap, ferret, or device so found shall escheat to the state.