

**481A.48 Restrictions on game birds and animals.**

1. A person, except as otherwise provided by law, shall not willfully disturb, pursue, shoot, kill, take or attempt to take, or have in possession any of the following game birds or animals except within the open season established by the commission: gray or fox squirrel, bobwhite quail, cottontail or jackrabbit, duck, snipe, pheasant, goose, woodcock, partridge, mourning dove, coot, rail, ruffed grouse, wild turkey, pigeon, or deer. The seasons, bag limits, possession limits, and locality shall be established by the department or commission under the authority of [sections 456A.24, 481A.38, and 481A.39](#).

2. The commission may adopt rules for the taking and possession of migratory birds which are subject to the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Migratory Bird Stamp Hunting Act during the time and in the manner permitted under those federal Acts. The commission shall not adopt a rule for the taking or possession of a migratory bird for which an open season is not authorized by another paragraph of [this section](#).

3. The commission may by rule permit the taking and possession of designated raptors and crows during the time and in the manner permitted under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

4. The commission shall establish methods by which pigeons may be taken which may include but are not limited to the use of trapping, chemical repellants, or toxic perches.

5. The commission shall establish one or more pistol or revolver seasons for hunting deer as separate firearm seasons or to coincide with one or more other firearm deer hunting seasons. Any pistol or revolver with a barrel length of at least four inches and firing straight wall or other centerfire ammunition propelling an expanding-type bullet with a maximum diameter of no less than three hundred fifty thousandths of one inch and no larger than five hundred thousandths of one inch and with a published or calculated muzzle energy of five hundred foot pounds or higher is legal for hunting deer during the pistol or revolver seasons. The commission shall adopt rules to allow black powder pistols or revolvers for hunting deer. The rules may limit types of projectiles. A person who is twenty years of age or less shall not hunt deer with a pistol or revolver unless that person is accompanied and under direct supervision throughout the hunt by a responsible person with a valid hunting license who is at least twenty-one years of age, with the consent of a parent, guardian, or spouse who is at least twenty-one years of age, pursuant to [section 724.22, subsection 4](#). The responsible person with a valid hunting license who is at least twenty-one years of age shall be responsible for the conveyance of the pistol or revolver while the pistol or revolver is not actively being used for hunting. A person possessing a prohibited pistol or revolver while hunting deer commits a scheduled violation under [section 805.8B, subsection 3](#), paragraph "h", subparagraph (5).

6. The commission shall adopt rules pursuant to [chapter 17A](#) allowing the use of cartridge rifles to hunt deer as follows:

a. A cartridge rifle may be used to hunt deer during youth and disabled deer hunting season and first and second shotgun deer hunting seasons by a person who has a valid deer hunting license and is otherwise qualified to hunt.

b. A cartridge rifle that is allowed pursuant to [this subsection](#) shall be of the same caliber and shall use the same straight wall or other ammunition as is allowed for use in a pistol or revolver for hunting deer as provided in [subsection 5](#). In addition, the commission shall provide, by rule, for the use of straight wall or other ammunition under [this subsection](#) that meets ballistics specifications similar to the requirements for straight wall or other ammunition allowed for use in a pistol or revolver for hunting deer as provided in [subsection 5](#).

c. A person possessing a prohibited rifle while hunting deer commits a scheduled violation under [section 805.8B, subsection 3](#), paragraph "h", subparagraph (6). In addition, the hunting privileges of a person convicted of possessing a prohibited rifle while hunting deer shall be suspended for two years.

[R60, §4381; C73, §4048; C97, §2551, 2552; S13, §2563-q; SS15, §2551, 2552, 2563-u; C24, §1767, 1768, 1776; C27, 31, §1767, 1767-a1, 1768, 1776; C39, §1794.011; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.48]

86 Acts, ch 1133, §2, 3

C93, §481A.48

97 Acts, ch 141, §1; 2001 Acts, ch 137, §5; 2011 Acts, ch 3, §1; 2017 Acts, ch 68, §1; 2020 Acts, ch 1071, §2; 2022 Acts, ch 1021, §136

Referred to in §170.8, 481A.38, 483A.8C, 805.8B(3)(h)

For applicable scheduled fines, see §805.8B, subsection 3, paragraph h  
Section not amended; internal reference change applied