

## CHAPTER 481A

### WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

Referred to in §232.8, 321K.1, 350.5, 455A.4, 455A.5, 456A.14, 456A.24, 482.1, 483A.21, 483A.32, 484B.3, 717B.2, 717B.3A, 717D.3, 805.16, 903.1

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SUBCHAPTER I  
GENERAL PROVISIONS

**481A.1 Definitions.**

Words and phrases as used in [this chapter](#) and [chapters 350, 456A, 456B, 457A, 461A, 461B, 461C, 462A, 462B, 464A, 465A, 465B, 465C, 481B, 482, 483A, 484A, and 484B](#) and such other chapters as relate to the subject matter of these chapters shall be construed as follows:

1. “*Alien*” shall not be construed to mean any person who has applied for naturalization papers.

2. “*Amphibian*” means a member of the class Amphibia.

3. “*Aquaculture*” means the controlled propagation, growth, and harvest of aquatic organisms, including, but not limited to fish, amphibians, reptiles, mollusks, crustaceans, gastropods, algae, and other aquatic plants, by an aquaculturist.

4. “*Aquaculture unit*” means all private waters for aquaculture with or without buildings, used for the purpose of propagating, raising, holding, or harvesting aquatic organisms for commercial purposes.

5. “*Aquaculturist*” means an individual involved in producing, transporting, or marketing aquatic products from private waters for commercial purposes.

6. “*Bag limit*” or “*possession limit*” is the number of any kind of game, fish, bird or animal or other wildlife form permitted to be taken or held in a specified time.

7. “*Bait*” includes but is not limited to minnows, green sunfish, orange-spotted sunfish, gizzard shad, frogs, crayfish, and salamanders.

8. “*Biological balance*” means that condition when the number of animals present over the long term is at or near the number of animals of a particular species that the available habitat is capable of supporting.

9. “*Bird*” means a member of the class Aves.

10. “*Buy*” means to purchase, offer to purchase, barter for, trade for, or lease.

11. “*Closed season*” is that period of time during which hunting, fishing, trapping or taking is prohibited.

12. “*Commercial purposes*” means selling, giving, or furnishing to others.

13. “*Commission*” means the natural resource commission.

14. “*Contraband*” as used in the laws pertaining to the work of the commission shall mean anything, the possession of which was illegally procured, or the possession of which is unlawful.

15. “*Department*” means the department of natural resources.

16. “*Director*” means the director of the department or the director’s designee.

17. “*Farm deer*” means the same as defined in [section 170.1](#).

18. “*Fish*” means a member of the class Pisces.

19. “*Frog*” means a member of the order Anura.

20. “*Fur-bearing animals*” means the following which are declared to be fur-bearing animals for the purpose of regulation and protection under the Code: beaver, badger, mink, otter, muskrat, raccoon, skunk, opossum, spotted skunk or civet cat, weasel, coyote, bobcat, wolf, groundhog, red fox, and gray fox. [This chapter](#) does not apply to domesticated fur-bearing animals.

21. “*Game*” means all of the animals specified in [this subsection](#) except those designated as not protected, and includes the heads, skins, and any other parts, and the nests and eggs of birds and their plumage.

a. The Anatidae: such as swans, geese, brant, and ducks.

b. The Rallidae: such as rails, coots, mudhens, and gallinules.

c. The Limicolae: such as shorebirds, plovers, surfbirds, snipe, woodcock, sandpipers, tattlers, godwits, and curlews.

d. The Galliformes: such as wild turkeys, grouse, pheasants, partridges, and quail.

e. The Columbidae: such as mourning doves and wild rock doves only.

f. The Sciuridae: such as gray squirrels and fox squirrels.

g. The Leporidae: cottontail rabbits and jackrabbits only.

- h. The Cervidae: such as elk or deer, other than farm deer.
22. “*Measurement of fish*” is the length from end of nose to longest tip of tail.
23. “*Minnnows*” means chubs, suckers, shiners, dace, stonerollers, mud minnows, redhorse, blunt-nose, and fathead minnows.
24. “*Mussels*” means the pearly fresh water mussels, clams or naiads, and their shells.
25. “*Open season*” is that period of time during which hunting, fishing, trapping or taking is permitted.
26. “*Person*” shall mean any person, firm, partnership, or corporation.
27. “*Possession*” is both active and constructive possession and any control of things referred to.
28. “*Private waters for aquaculture*” means waters confined within an artificial containment, such as man-made ponds, vats, tanks, raceways, and other indoor or outdoor facilities constructed wholly within or on the land of an owner or lessee and used for aquaculture.
29. “*Reptile*” means a member of the class Reptilia.
30. “*Sell*” or “*sale*” is selling, bartering, exchanging, offering or exposing for sale.
31. “*Spawn*” means any of the eggs of any fish, amphibian, or mussel.
32. “*Take*” or “*taking*” or “*attempting to take*” or “*hunt*” is any pursuing, or any hunting, fishing, killing, trapping, snaring, netting, searching for or shooting at, or stalking or lying in wait for any game, animal, bird, or fish protected by the state laws or rules adopted by the commission whether or not such animal be then subsequently captured, killed, or injured.
33. “*Transport*” or “*transportation*” is all carrying or moving or causing to be carried or moved.
34. “*Turtle*” means any member of the order Testudines.
35. “*Whitetail*” means an animal belonging to the Cervidae family and classified as part of the Virginianus species of the Odocoileus genus, commonly referred to as whitetail.
36. “*Wild animal*” means a wild mammal, bird, fish, amphibian, reptile, or other wildlife found in this state, whether game or nongame, migratory or nonmigratory, the ownership and title to which is claimed by this state.
37. “*Wild mammal*” means a member of the class Mammalia.
- [C39, §1703.60; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.1]  
 83 Acts, ch 168, §5; 86 Acts, ch 1245, §1850 – 1852; 88 Acts, ch 1216, §1, 2; 92 Acts, ch 1160, §17; 92 Acts, ch 1186, §1; 92 Acts, ch 1216, §1  
 C93, §481A.1  
 93 Acts, ch 99, §1; 95 Acts, ch 134, §5; 2003 Acts, ch 149, §14 – 16, 23; 2012 Acts, ch 1118, §4; 2014 Acts, ch 1026, §110; 2021 Acts, ch 48, §4; 2022 Acts, ch 1021, §135; 2023 Acts, ch 66, §115  
 Referred to in §456A.37, 556H.1, 717B.1, 717B.2, 717B.3A, 717B.6, 717D.3  
 Subsection 32 amended

**481A.2 State ownership and title — exceptions.**

The title and ownership of all fish, mussels, clams, and frogs in any of the public waters of the state, and in all ponds, sloughs, bayous, or other land and waters adjacent to any public waters stocked with fish by overflow of public waters, and of all wild game, animals, and birds, including their nests and eggs, and all other wildlife, found in the state, whether game or nongame, native or migratory, except deer in parks and in public and private preserves, the ownership of which was acquired prior to April 19, 1911, are hereby declared to be in the state, except as otherwise provided in [this chapter](#). The title and ownership of all aquatic organisms in aquaculture units and private aquacultural waters shall be in private persons.

[S13, §2562-c, 2563-j; SS15, §2562-b; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1704; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.2]

90 Acts, ch 1044, §1; 92 Acts, ch 1216, §2

C93, §481A.2

Referred to in §1.9

**481A.3 Conclusive presumption.**

Any person catching, taking, killing, or having in possession any of such fish, mussels, clams, frogs, game, animals, or birds, their nests or eggs, or other wildlife in violation of the

provisions of [this chapter](#), shall be held to consent that the title to the same shall be and remain in the state for the purpose of regulating and controlling the catching, taking, or having in possession the same, and disposing thereof after such catching, taking, or killing.

[S13, §2562-c; SS15, §2562-b; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1705; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.3]

C93, §481A.3

#### **481A.4 Fish hatcheries — game farms.**

The commission may establish and control the state hatcheries and game farms, which shall be used for the purpose of stocking the waters of the state with fish and the natural covers with game birds to the extent of the means provided for that purpose; and for impartially and equitably distributing all birds, eggs, and fry raised by or furnished to the state, or for the state through other sources, in the streams, lakes, and natural covers of the state.

[C97, §2539; SS15, §2539; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1709; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.4]

C93, §481A.4

[2019 Acts, ch 24, §69](#)

#### **481A.5 State game refuges.**

1. The commission may establish state game refuges or sanctuaries on any land owned by the state of Iowa suitable for this purpose when necessary for the preservation of biological balance pursuant to the provisions of [section 481A.39](#), for the protection of public parks, for the protection of the public health, safety and welfare, or to effect sound wildlife management.

2. In emergency situations when the maintenance of the biological balance as provided in [section 481A.39](#) is threatened, the director may establish temporary state game refuges in conformity with sound wildlife management. The establishment of a temporary refuge shall be accomplished by posting notices in conspicuous places around the refuge. The establishment of a temporary refuge by the director shall be effective until five days after the next meeting of the commission or for such longer time as the commission may determine is necessary to maintain a biological balance as provided in [section 481A.39](#) and to effect sound wildlife management.

[C27, 31, 35, §1709-a1; C39, §1709.1; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.5]

C93, §481A.5

#### **481A.6 Game management area.**

The commission may establish a game management area upon any public lands or waters, or with the consent of the owner upon any private lands or waters, when necessary to maintain a biological balance as provided in [section 481A.39](#) or to provide for public hunting, fishing, or trapping in conformity with sound wildlife management; and when a game management area is established, the commission shall with the consent of the owner, if any, have the right to post and prohibit, and to regulate or limit the lands or waters against trespassing, hunting, fishing, or trapping, and any violation of the regulations is unlawful.

[C35, §1709-e1; C39, §1709.2; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.6]

[90 Acts, ch 1216, §6](#)

C93, §481A.6

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(c\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph c

#### **481A.6A Pen-reared pheasants — release by landowners and tenants.**

1. As used in [this section](#), “*pen-reared pheasant*” means a Chinese ring-necked pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus torquatus*) and its subspecies which originates from a captive population and which has been propagated and held by a hatchery. For the purposes of [this section](#) “*pen-reared pheasant*” does not include a Reeves (*Syrmaticus reevesii*) or Lady Amherst (*Chrysolophus amherstiae*) pheasant, a subspecies of the Chinese ring-necked pheasant classified as a Japanese (*Phasianus versicolor*) or a Black-necked (*P. colchicus colchicus*) pheasant, or a melanistic mutant (black, white, or other color mix) of the Chinese ring-necked pheasant. [This subsection](#) is not applicable to game birds released for officially

sanctioned field meets or trials and retriever meets or trials on private land pursuant to [section 481A.22](#), pen-raised game birds used on private land pursuant to [section 481A.56](#), or game birds released on hunting preserves pursuant to [chapter 484B](#).

2. Notwithstanding [section 481A.60](#), an owner or tenant of land may obtain pen-reared pheasants from a hatchery approved by the department, and raise or release the pen-reared pheasants on the owner's or tenant's land. A person shall not relocate a pen-reared pheasant to any other land.

3. A person taking a pen-reared pheasant shall comply with all requirements provided in [this chapter](#) and [chapter 483A](#).

[2010 Acts, ch 1180, §1](#); [2012 Acts, ch 1118, §5](#); [2013 Acts, ch 90, §143](#)

Referred to in [§484B.3](#)

**481A.6B Pheasant population studies — reports.** Repealed by its own terms; [2012 Acts, ch 1106, §1](#).

#### **481A.7 Hunting on game refuges.**

1. It shall be unlawful to hunt, pursue, kill, trap or take any wild animal, bird, or game on any state game refuge so established at any time of the year, and no one shall carry firearms thereon, providing, however, that predatory birds and animals may be killed or trapped under the authority and direction of the director.

2. The commission may specify the distance from a state game refuge where shooting is prohibited, and shall have notice of same posted at such distance in conspicuous places around the refuge, provided, however, this prohibition shall not apply to owners or tenants hunting on their own land outside of a state game refuge. The commission may prohibit shooting at any reasonable distance from a state game refuge deemed necessary to accomplish the purposes for which the refuge is established.

[C27, 31, 35, §1709-a2; C39, §1709.3; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.7]

[86 Acts, ch 1245, §1855](#)

C93, §481A.7

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(d\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph d

#### **481A.8 Notice of establishment.**

When any such refuge or preserve is established by the commission, it shall post notices of such establishment in conspicuous places around the refuge.

[C27, 31, 35, §1709-a3; C39, §1709.4; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.8]

C93, §481A.8

#### **481A.9 Spawning grounds.**

To effect sound wildlife management and maintain biological balance as provided in [section 481A.39](#), the commission may set aside certain portions of any state waters for spawning grounds where the same are suitable for this purpose for such length of time as it may deem advisable by the posting of notices in conspicuous places around such area, and it shall be unlawful for any person to fish or to in any manner interfere with the spawning of fish in this area. Any person violating any of the provisions of [this section](#) shall be guilty of a simple misdemeanor.

[C31, 35, §1709-c1; C39, §1709.5; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.9]

C93, §481A.9

#### **481A.10 Reports and accounting.**

At the time provided by law, the director shall make a report to the governor of the director's doings for the preceding biennial period, including therein an itemized statement of all receipts and disbursements; also all contracts for the taking of soft fish from the waters of this state, with the profits accruing from such contracts; also such other information upon

the subject of the culture of fish and the protection of game as may be of value. All funds derived under said contracts shall be paid into the state fish and game protection fund.

[C97, §2539; SS15, §2539; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1710; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.10]

C93, §481A.10

#### **481A.10A Farmer advisory committee.**

1. The director shall establish a farmer advisory committee for the purpose of providing information to the department regarding crop and tree damage caused by deer, wild turkey, and other predators.

2. Members of the committee shall include a representative designated by each of the following organizations:

- a. The Iowa corn growers association.
- b. The Iowa farm bureau federation.
- c. The Iowa farmers union.
- d. The Iowa state horticulture society.
- e. The Iowa Christmas tree growers association.
- f. The Iowa nursery and landscape association.
- g. The department of agriculture and land stewardship.
- h. The Iowa state university agricultural extension service.

3. The committee shall meet with a representative of the department of natural resources on a semiannual basis. The committee shall serve without compensation or reimbursement for expenses.

[87 Acts, ch 233, §224](#)

CS87, §109.10A

C93, §481A.10A

[2008 Acts, ch 1037, §1, 6; 2014 Acts, ch 1026, §111](#)

Referred to in [§481C.2](#)

#### **481A.11 Seized or accidentally killed game — disposition.**

Except as provided in [section 481A.13](#) or [481A.13A](#), any game or fish seized by the commission under [section 481A.12](#) or any game accidentally killed by a motor vehicle on a public highway shall, when salvageable, be disposed of as determined by the commission or its designee.

[C77, 79, 81, §109.11]

C93, §481A.11

[2018 Acts, ch 1150, §1](#)

#### **481A.12 Seizure of wildlife taken or handled illegally.**

The director or any peace officer shall seize with or without warrant and take possession of, or direct the disposal of, any fish, furs, birds, animals, mussels, clams, or frogs, which have been caught, taken, or killed at a time, in a manner, or for a purpose, or had in possession or under control, or offered for shipment, or illegally transported in the state or to a point beyond its borders, contrary to the Code. All fish, furs, birds, animals, mussels, clams, or frogs seized under [this section](#) shall be relinquished to a representative of the commission, disposed of, or kept as provided in [section 481A.13](#).

[SS15, §2539; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1714; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.12]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §3](#)

C93, §481A.12

[94 Acts, ch 1148, §1; 2018 Acts, ch 1150, §2](#)

Referred to in [§331.653, 481A.11, 481A.13A, 483A.33, 716.8](#)

#### **481A.13 Search warrants.**

1. Any court having jurisdiction of the offense, upon receiving proof of probable cause for believing that any fish, mussels, clams, frogs, birds, furs, or animals caught, taken, killed,

had in possession, under control, or shipped, contrary to the Code, or hidden or concealed in any place, shall issue a search warrant and cause a search to be made in any place therefor.

2. The property so seized under warrant shall be safely kept under the direction of the court so long as necessary for the purpose of being used as evidence in any trial. If a trial results in a conviction, the property seized shall be confiscated by the director or the director's officers. If the trial does not result in a conviction, the property shall be returned to the person pursuant to [section 481A.13A](#) unless the property is fish or wildlife that is illegal to possess, including fish or wildlife that was taken, possessed, or transported unlawfully.

[SS15, §2539; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1716; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.13]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §4](#)

C93, §481A.13

[2018 Acts, ch 1150, §3](#); [2019 Acts, ch 24, §70](#)

Referred to in [§481A.11](#), [481A.12](#), [481A.13A](#)

Search warrant proceedings, [chapters 808](#) and 809

#### **481A.13A Conviction required for property confiscation — return of property.**

1. The state shall not confiscate property seized under [section 481A.12](#) or [481A.13](#) unless the person from whom the property was seized is convicted of the violation for which the property was seized. However, the state shall not return any fish or wildlife that is illegal to possess, including fish or wildlife that was taken, possessed, or transported unlawfully.

2. If the person from whom the property was seized is not convicted of the violation for which the property was seized, the department, law enforcement agency, or other governmental agency in possession of the seized property shall return the seized property to the person within thirty days of any of the following:

a. The date the person is found not guilty of the violation.

b. The date the action involving the violation is dismissed.

c. The date the statute of limitations expires for the alleged violation for which the property was seized.

3. For purposes of [this section](#), “*convicted*” includes a finding of guilt, payment of a scheduled fine, a plea of guilty, deferred judgment, deferred or suspended sentence, adjudication of delinquency, or circumstance where a person is not charged with a criminal offense related to the violation based in whole or in part on the person's agreement to provide information regarding the criminal activity of another person.

[2018 Acts, ch 1150, §4](#)

Referred to in [§481A.11](#), [481A.13](#), [483A.32](#), [483A.33](#)

#### **481A.14 Dams — fishways.**

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to place, erect, or cause to be placed or erected, any dam or other device or contrivance in such manner as to hinder or obstruct the free passage of fish up, down, or through such waters, except as otherwise provided in [this chapter](#). Dams for manufacturing or other lawful purposes may be erected across the waters of the state. No permanent dam or obstruction across such waters shall be erected or maintained which is not provided with a fishway, except by written approval of the director, nor shall any pumping station or plant except sand pumping and dredging machines, in or connected with such waters be constructed or operated except by written approval of the director, which is not provided with screens to prevent fish from entering the pumping station or plant. Such fishways and screens shall be constructed and used according to the plans and specifications prepared and furnished by the director. Any dam, obstruction, or pumping plant which is not so constructed is a public nuisance and may be abated accordingly.

[C97, §2540, 2547, 2548; S13, §2547; SS15, §2540, 2548; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1741; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.14]

[86 Acts, ch 1245, §1855](#)

C93, §481A.14

Nuisances in general, [chapter 657](#)

**481A.15 Destruction or alteration of dam.**

It is unlawful for any owner or the owner's agent to remove or destroy any existing dam, or alter it in a way so as to lower the water level, without having received written approval from the environmental protection commission of the department.

[C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1742; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.15; [82 Acts, ch 1199, §54, 96](#)]

[86 Acts, ch 1245, §1853](#)

C93, §481A.15

**481A.16 Taking by director for stocking and exchange.**

The director may take from the public waters of the state, at any time and in any manner, any fish for the purpose of propagating or restocking other waters, or exchanging with fish and wildlife agencies of other states, the federal government, or private fish hatcheries.

[C97, §2546; S13, §2546; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1744; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.16]

[83 Acts, ch 110, §1](#)

C93, §481A.16

**481A.17 Target shooting sports program.**

The department shall establish a target shooting sports program to promote recreational target shooting sports. The purposes of the program shall be to introduce more Iowans to target shooting sports, promote existing target shooting programs, provide more target shooting facilities, and improve existing target shooting facilities. The commission may adopt rules to achieve these purposes.

[2012 Acts, ch 1118, §6](#)

**481A.18 Hunting incidents — mandatory reporting.**

[This section](#) applies to a person who is involved in a hunting incident with a firearm or a fall from a device that allows or assists a person to hunt from an elevated location, if the hunting incident results in an injury to a person, or property damage exceeding one hundred dollars. The person shall report the hunting incident to the sheriff's office in the county where the hunting incident occurred or to the department within twelve hours after the hunting incident occurred. However, if an injury caused by the hunting incident prevents timely reporting, the person shall make the report as soon as practicable. A person who fails to report the hunting incident as required in [this section](#) is guilty of a simple misdemeanor.

[90 Acts, ch 1198, §1](#)

C91, §109.18

C93, §481A.18

[2008 Acts, ch 1161, §15](#)

**481A.19 Reciprocity of states.**

1. *a.* Any person licensed by the authority of Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, Wisconsin, Nebraska, or South Dakota to take fish, game, mussels, or fur-bearing animals from or in the waters forming the boundary between such state and Iowa, may take such fish, game, mussels, or fur-bearing animals from that portion of said waters lying within the territorial jurisdiction of this state, without having procured a license from the director of this state, in the same manner that persons holding Iowa licenses may do, if the laws of Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, Wisconsin, Nebraska, or South Dakota, respectively, extend a similar privilege to persons so licensed under the laws of Iowa.

*b.* Any person licensed by the authority of Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, Wisconsin, Nebraska, or South Dakota to take fish, game, mussels, or fur-bearing animals from or in lands under the jurisdiction of any of those states may take such fish, game, mussels, or fur-bearing animals from or in lands under the jurisdiction of the commission when such land is adjacent to that respective state but is separated from other land in Iowa by a body of water, without having procured a license from the director of this state, in the same manner that persons holding Iowa licenses may do, if the laws of Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri,

Wisconsin, Nebraska, or South Dakota, respectively, extend a similar privilege to persons so licensed under the laws of Iowa.

2. Any privileges conferred by [this section](#) shall be subject to a reciprocal agreement as negotiated by the commission and the authority of a state provided in [subsection 1](#) which confers upon a licensee of this state reciprocal rights, privileges, and immunities as provided in [section 483A.31](#). Such agreements may include determination of which state's seasons and limits shall apply for specific geographical areas.

[C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1762; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.19]

[86 Acts, ch 1245, §1855](#)

C93, §481A.19

[2008 Acts, ch 1161, §16; 2009 Acts, ch 144, §15, 16; 2011 Acts, ch 34, §108](#)

#### **481A.20 Parrots and canaries.**

[This chapter](#) shall not be construed to forbid the selling or shipping of parrots, canaries, or any other cage birds which are imported from other countries or not native to any part of the United States.

[S13, §2563-r; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1777; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.20]

C93, §481A.20

#### **481A.21 Birds as targets.**

A person shall not keep or use any live pigeon or other bird as a target, to be shot at for amusement or as a test of skill in marksmanship, or shoot at a bird kept or used for such purpose, or be a party to such shooting, or lease any building, room, field, or premises, or knowingly permit the use thereof, for the purpose of such shooting. [This section](#) does not prevent any person from shooting at live pigeons, sparrows, and starlings when used in the training of hunting dogs. [This section](#) does not prevent any person from shooting at a game bird that is released a minimum of twenty-five yards from that person on a licensed hunting preserve. For the purposes of [this section](#), "game bird" means the same as defined in [section 484B.1](#).

[S13, §2563-i; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1778; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.21]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §5](#)

C93, §481A.21

[2009 Acts, ch 179, §213, 217; 2010 Acts, ch 1154, §1](#)

Referred to in [§481A.22, 805.8B\(3\)\(c\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph c

#### **481A.22 Field and retriever meets — permits and tags required.**

1. a. All officially sanctioned field meets or trials and retriever meets or trials where the skill of dogs is demonstrated in pointing, retrieving, trailing, or chasing any game bird, game animal, or fur-bearing animal shall require a field trial permit. Except as otherwise provided by law, it shall be unlawful to kill any wildlife in such events. Notwithstanding the provisions of [section 481A.21](#) it shall be lawful to hold field meets or trials and retriever meets or trials where dogs are permitted to work in exhibition or contest whereby the skill of dogs is demonstrated by retrieving dead or wounded game birds which have been propagated by licensed game breeders within the state or secured from lawful sources outside the state and lawfully brought into the state. All of the birds must be released on the day of trials on premises where the trials are held.

b. Any birds released may be shot by official guns after having secured a permit as provided in [this section](#).

c. The permits may be issued by the director of the department upon proper application and the payment of a fee of two dollars for each trial held. A representative of the department shall attend all such trials and enforce the laws and regulations governing same.

2. The person or persons designated by the committee in charge to do the shooting for the trials shall be known as the official guns, and no other person shall be permitted to kill or attempt to kill any of the birds released for such trials.

3. Before any birds are released under [this section](#), they must each have attached a tag provided by the department and attached by a representative of the department at a cost of not more than ten cents for each tag. All tags are to remain attached to birds until prepared for consumption.

4. It is unlawful for any person to hold, conduct, or to participate in a field or retriever trial before the permit required by [this section](#) has been secured or for any person to possess or remove from the trial grounds any birds which have not been tagged as required in [this section](#).

[C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.22]

[86 Acts, ch 1244, §24](#); [90 Acts, ch 1216, §7](#)

C93, §481A.22

[2015 Acts, ch 30, §157](#); [2016 Acts, ch 1011, §88](#)

Referred to in [§481A.6A, 805.8B\(3\)\(c\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph c

#### **481A.23 Transportation for sale prohibited.**

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation, except as otherwise provided, to offer for transportation or to transport by common carrier or vehicle of any kind, to any place within or without the state, for the purposes of sale, any of the fish, game, animals, or birds taken, caught, or killed within the state, or to peddle any of such fish, game, animals, or birds.

[C97, §2555; SS15, §2540, 2555; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1780; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.23]

C93, §481A.23

See also [§481A.32](#) and [481A.38](#)

#### **481A.24 Use of mobile radio transmitter prohibited — exceptions.**

1. For the purposes of [this section](#):

a. “*One-way mobile radio transmitter*” means a radio capable of transmitting a signal only but not capable of transmitting a voice signal. The signal may be tracked or located by radio telemetry or located by an audible sound.

b. “*Two-way mobile radio transmitter*” means a radio capable of transmitting and receiving voice messages including, but not limited to, a citizen band radio or a cellular telephone.

2. Except as otherwise provided in [this section](#), a person who is hunting shall not use a one-way or two-way mobile radio transmitter to communicate the location or direction of game or fur-bearing animals or to coordinate the movement of other hunters. [This subsection](#) does not apply to the hunting of coyotes except during the shotgun deer season as set by the commission under [section 481A.38](#).

3. A licensed falconer may use a one-way mobile radio transmitter to recover a free-flying bird of prey properly banded and covered on the falconry permit.

4. A person hunting with the aid of a dog may use at any time a one-way mobile transmitter designed to track or aid in the recovery of the dog.

[C79, 81, §109.24]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §6](#)

C93, §481A.24

[93 Acts, ch 119, §1](#); [94 Acts, ch 1147, §1](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(d\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph d

#### **481A.25 Reserved.**

**481A.26 Unlawful transportation.**

Except as otherwise provided, in any one day, a person shall not ship, carry, or transport game, fish, birds, or animals, except fur-bearing animals, in excess of the number the person is legally permitted to possess.

[C97, §2555; SS15, §2555; C24, 27, 31, §1783; C35, §1782-e1; C39, §1782.1; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.26]

C93, §481A.26

[2023 Acts, ch 66, §116](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(c\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fine, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph c  
Section amended

**481A.27 through 481A.29** Reserved.

**481A.30 Entire shipment contraband.**

In the shipping of fish, game, animals, birds, or furs, whenever a container includes one or more fish, game, animals, birds, or furs that are contraband, the entire contents of the container shall be deemed contraband and shall be seized by the director or the director's officers.

[C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1787; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.30]

C93, §481A.30

[2022 Acts, ch 1032, §81](#)

**481A.31 Game brought into the state.**

It shall be lawful for any person, firm, or corporation to have in possession any fish or game lawfully taken outside the state and lawfully brought into the state, but the burden of proof shall be upon the person in such possession to show that such fish or game was lawfully killed and lawfully brought into the state.

[SS15, §2555; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1788; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.31]

C93, §481A.31

**481A.32 Violations — penalties.**

1. A person who does any of the following is guilty of a simple misdemeanor and shall be assessed a minimum fine of twenty dollars for each offense for which no other punishment is provided:

a. Takes, catches, kills, injures, destroys, has in possession, buys, sells, ships, or transports any frogs, fish, mussels, birds, their nests, eggs, or plumage, fowls, game, or animals or their fur or raw pelt in violation of the provisions of [this chapter](#) or of administrative rules of the commission.

b. Uses any device, equipment, seine, trap, net, tackle, firearm, drug, poison, explosive, or other substance or means, the use of which is prohibited by [this chapter](#).

c. Uses any device, equipment, seine, trap, net, tackle, firearm, drug, poison, explosive, or other substance or means at a time, place, or in a manner or for a purpose prohibited.

d. Does any other act in violation of the provisions of [this chapter](#) or of administrative rules of the commission.

2. Each fish, fowl, bird, bird's nest, egg, or plumage, and animal unlawfully caught, taken, killed, injured, destroyed, possessed, bought, sold, or shipped shall be a separate offense.

3. A person convicted of taking a deer, antelope, moose, buffalo, or elk with a prohibited weapon as defined by rules of the department, is subject to a fine of one hundred dollars for each offense committed while taking the animal with the prohibited weapon.

[R60, §4381 – 4383; C73, §4048, 4053, 4063; C97, §2543, 2544, 2551, 2552, 2556, 2558, 2561; S13, §2547-e, 2551-b, 2561, 2563-a8, -i, -o, -s, -v; SS15, §2540-a, 2544, 2551, 2552, 2556; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1789; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.32]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §7, 8](#)

C93, §481A.32

[2002 Acts, ch 1147, §1](#); [2018 Acts, ch 1026, §150](#)

Referred to in [§481A.59](#)

See also [§481A.23](#) and [481A.38](#)

#### **481A.33 Violations relating to dams.**

1. A person who erects any dam or other obstruction prohibited by [this chapter](#) or at a place or in a manner prohibited shall be guilty of a simple misdemeanor.

2. A person who injures or destroys any dam lawfully erected shall be guilty of an aggravated misdemeanor.

[C97, §2548, 2550; SS15, §2548; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1790; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.33]

C93, §481A.33

[2021 Acts, ch 80, §312](#)

#### **481A.34 Violations by common carrier.**

A common carrier which violates any of the provisions of [this chapter](#) relating to receiving, having in possession, shipping, or delivering any fish, fowl, birds, birds' nests, eggs, or plumage, fur, raw pelts, game, or animals, in violation of the provisions of the Code or contrary to the regulations and restrictions provided in [this chapter](#), and any agent, employee, or servant of a common carrier violating such provisions, is guilty of a simple misdemeanor.

[C73, §4049; C97, §2557; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1791; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.34]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §9](#)

C93, §481A.34

#### **481A.35 Attorney general and county attorneys.**

It shall be the duty of the attorney general, when requested by the director, to give the attorney general's opinion in writing upon any question of law arising under [this chapter](#); and it shall be the duty of all county attorneys in this state when requested by the director or any officer appointed by the commission, to prosecute all criminal actions brought in their respective counties for violations of the provisions of [this chapter](#). Nothing in [this chapter](#) shall be construed as prohibiting any person from instituting legal proceedings for the enforcement of any of the provisions thereof.

[R60, §4385; C73, §4051; C97, §2559; SS15, §2559; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1792; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.35]

C93, §481A.35

Referred to in [§331.756\(23\)](#)

#### **481A.36 Information — venue.**

1. In all prosecutions under [this chapter](#), any number of violations may be charged in one information, but each charge shall be set out in a separate count if more than one charge is included in one information.

2. Prosecutions for violations may be brought in the county in which any fish, fowl, bird, bird's nest, eggs, or plumage, or animals protected by [this chapter](#) were unlawfully caught, taken, killed, trapped, ensnared, bought, sold, or shipped unlawfully, or in any county into or through which they were received, transported, or found in the possession of any person.

[R60, §4385; C73, §4051; C97, §2559; SS15, §2559; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1793; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.36]

C93, §481A.36

[2018 Acts, ch 1041, §127](#); [2019 Acts, ch 24, §71](#)

#### **481A.37 Presumptive evidence.**

It shall be presumptive evidence of a violation of the provisions of [this chapter](#) for any person to:

1. Have in possession any fish, game, furs, birds, birds' nests, eggs or plumage, or animals, which have been unlawfully caught, taken, or killed.

2. Be in possession of such fish, game, furs, birds, or animals at a time when or place where it shall be unlawful to take, catch, or kill the same, except game, birds or animals, during the first ten days of the closed season.

3. Have in possession any implements, devices, equipment, or means whatever of taking fish, birds, or animals protected by the Code at any place where the possession or use thereof is prohibited.

[C97, §2554; S13, §2563-a10; SS15, §2554, 2555; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §1794; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.37]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §10, 11](#)

C93, §481A.37

## SUBCHAPTER II

### PROPAGATION AND PROTECTION OF FISH, GAME, WILD BIRDS, AND ANIMALS

#### **481A.38 Prohibited acts — restrictions on the taking of wildlife — special licenses.**

It is unlawful for a person to take, pursue, kill, trap or ensnare, buy, sell, possess, transport, or attempt to so take, pursue, kill, trap or ensnare, buy, sell, possess, or transport any game, protected nongame animals, fur-bearing animals or fur or skin of such animals, mussels, frogs, spawn or fish or any part thereof, except upon the terms, conditions, limitations, and restrictions set forth herein, and administrative rules necessary to carry out the purposes set out in [section 481A.39](#), or as provided by the Code.

1. *a.* The commission may upon its own motion and after an investigation, alter, limit, or restrict the methods or means employed and the instruments or equipment used in taking wild mammals, birds subject to [section 481A.48](#), fish, reptiles, and amphibians, if the investigation reveals that the action would be desirable or beneficial in promoting the interests of conservation, or the commission may, after an investigation when it is found there is imminent danger of loss of fish through natural causes, authorize the taking of fish by means found advisable to salvage imperiled fish populations.

*b.* The commission shall adopt a rule permitting a crossbow to be used only by individuals with disabilities who are physically incapable of using a bow and arrow under the conditions in which a bow and arrow is permitted. The commission shall prepare an application to be used by an individual requesting the status. The application shall require the individual's physician or physical therapist licensed under [chapter 148A](#) to sign a statement declaring that the individual is not physically able to use a bow and arrow.

2. If the commission finds that the number of hunters licensed or the type of license issued to take deer or wild turkey should be limited or further regulated, the commission shall adopt procedures, by rule, for issuing the licenses. [This subsection](#) does not apply to the hunting of wild turkey on a hunting preserve licensed under [chapter 484B](#).

3. The department and the commission shall exercise regulatory authority regarding seasons, bag limits, possession limits, locality, the method of taking, or the taking of fish and wildlife within the boundaries of the Sac and Fox tribe settlement in Tama county only to the extent provided in a written agreement between the tribal council of the Sac and Fox tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa and the department. The written agreement shall not be construed to supersede or impair the regulatory authority exercised by the commission pursuant to the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the federal Migratory Bird Stamp Hunting Act, the federal Endangered Species Act, or other federal law, and shall not be construed to supersede or impair the regulatory authority exercised by the Sac and Fox tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa pursuant to any federal act, statute, or law. The department and the commission shall not unreasonably fail to enter into an agreement and shall pursue such an agreement in an expedient manner. [This subsection](#) shall become effective upon signing of the written agreement by the director of the department and the chairperson of the Sac and Fox tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa.

[R60, §4381; C73, §4048; C97, §2551, 2555; S13, §2562-c, 2563-j, -k, -m, -n; SS15, §2540, 2551, 2555, 2562-b, -c, 2563-a1, -a2, -u; C24, 27, 31, §1718, 1719, 1755, 1767, 1774; C35,

§1718-c1; C39, §1794.001; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.38; 82 Acts, ch 1037, §1]

84 Acts, ch 1213, §1; 84 Acts, ch 1260, §1; 88 Acts, ch 1216, §12; 89 Acts, ch 87, §1; 90 Acts, ch 1109, §1; 92 Acts, ch 1160, §18

C93, §481A.38

96 Acts, ch 1129, §97; 99 Acts, ch 39, §1; 2001 Acts, ch 134, §1, 2; 2007 Acts, ch 189, §1, 2; 2011 Acts, ch 25, §143; 2023 Acts, ch 106, §1

Referred to in §456A.24, 481A.24, 481A.48, 481A.67, 483A.24, 483A.28, 805.8B(3)(f), 805.8B(3)(g)

See also §481A.23 and 481A.32

For applicable scheduled fines, see §805.8B, subsection 3, paragraphs f and g

Subsection 1, paragraph b amended

#### **481A.39 Biological balance maintained.**

The commission is designated the sole agency to determine the facts as to whether biological balance does or does not exist. The commission shall, by administrative rule, extend, shorten, open, or close seasons and set, increase, or reduce catch limits, bag limits, size limits, possession limits, or territorial limitations or further regulate taking conditions in accordance with sound fish and wildlife management principles.

[C39, §1794.002; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.39]

88 Acts, ch 1216, §13

C93, §481A.39

Referred to in §481A.5, 481A.6, 481A.9, 481A.38, 481A.48, 481A.67, 483A.6A, 483A.28

#### **481A.40 Use of drugs on wildlife — penalty.**

1. For the purposes of [this section](#), “drug” means any chemical substance, other than food, that affects the structure or biological function of any wildlife under the jurisdiction of the department of natural resources.

2. Except with written authorization from the director or the director’s designee or as otherwise provided by law, a person shall not administer any drug to any wildlife under the jurisdiction of the department of natural resources, including but not limited to drugs used for fertility control, disease prevention or treatment, immobilization, or growth stimulation.

3. [This section](#) does not prohibit the treatment of sick or injured wildlife by a licensed veterinarian or holder of a wildlife rehabilitation permit.

4. [This section](#) shall not be construed to limit employees of agencies of the state, the United States, or local animal control officers, licensed animal shelters, or licensed pounds in the performance of their official duties related to public health, wildlife management, or wildlife removal. However, a drug shall not be administered by any person for fertility control or growth stimulation except as provided in [subsection 2](#).

5. An officer of the department may take possession of or dispose of any wildlife under the jurisdiction of the department of natural resources that the officer reasonably believes has been administered drugs in violation of [this section](#).

6. A person who violates [this section](#) is guilty of a serious misdemeanor.

2007 Acts, ch 56, §1

**481A.41** Reserved.

#### **481A.42 Nongame protected — exclusion.**

Protected nongame species include wild fish, wild birds, wild bats, wild reptiles, and wild amphibians, an egg, a nest, a dead body or part of a dead body, and a product made from part of a body of a wild fish, wild bird, wild bat, wild reptile, or wild amphibian. However, nongame does not include game, fish that may be taken pursuant to regulations established under the Code or departmental rule, fur-bearing animals, turtles, or frogs, as defined in [this chapter](#). The commission shall designate by rule those species of nongame which by their abundance or habits are declared a nuisance, and these species shall not be protected. Rules adopted shall include but are not limited to a provision that states that any bat, except for

the Indiana bat, which is found within a building that is occupied by human beings is not a protected nongame species.

[S13, §2563-q; C24, 27, 31, §1776; C39, §1794.005; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.42]

[83 Acts, ch 168, §6](#); [92 Acts, ch 1107, §1](#)

C93, §481A.42

[93 Acts, ch 20, §1](#)

Referred to in [§717B.1](#)

**481A.43 through 481A.46** Reserved.

**481A.47 Importing fish and game — permits.**

1. Unless application is first made in writing to the commission for a permit and a permit is granted, a person, firm, or corporation shall not, except as otherwise provided, bring into the state of Iowa for the purpose of propagating or introducing, or place or introduce into any of the inland or boundary waters of the state, any fish or spawn thereof that are not native to such waters, or introduce or stock any bird or animal.

2. A permit shall be granted only after the commission has made such investigation or inspection of the fish, birds, or animals as the commission may deem necessary to determine whether or not such fish, birds, or animals are free from disease and whether or not such introduction will be beneficial or detrimental to the native wildlife and the people of the state, and may or may not approve such planting, releasing, or introduction according to its findings.

3. Nothing in [this section](#) shall prohibit licensed game breeders from securing native or exotic birds or animals from outside the state and bringing them into the state and a game breeder shall not be required to have a permit as provided in [this section](#) when such birds or animals are not released to the wild but are held on the game breeder's premises as breeding stock.

[C39, §1794.010; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.47]

C93, §481A.47

[2018 Acts, ch 1026, §151](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(d\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph d

### SUBCHAPTER III

#### TERRITORIES, OPEN SEASONS, AND BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS FOR GAME

**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 5](#). 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](#)

**481A.49** Reserved.

#### **481A.50 Selling birds.**

No part of the plumage, skin, or body of any bird protected by [this chapter](#) shall be sold or had in possession for sale, irrespective of whether said bird was captured or killed within or without the state, except as otherwise provided.

[C39, §1794.013; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.50]

C93, §481A.50

Referred to in [§481A.55, 805.8B\(3\)\(c\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fine, see [§805.8B, subsection 3, paragraph c](#)

**481A.51 Hunting license not trapping license.**

A hunting license shall not permit the holder to trap any fur-bearing animal as defined in [this chapter](#).

[SS15, §2563-a1; C24, 27, §1718; C31, §1718-c1; C39, §1794.014; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.51]

C93, §481A.51

**481A.52 Exhibiting catch to officer.**

A person who has in possession any game bird, game animal, fish, or fur or part thereof shall upon request of the director or any officer appointed by the department exhibit the game bird, game animal, fish, or fur or part thereof to the director or officer. A person who refuses to comply with a request made under this section commits a scheduled violation under [section 805.8B](#).

[C31, §1768-c1; C39, §1794.015; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.52]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §14](#)

C93, §481A.52

[2022 Acts, ch 1021, §137](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(d\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph d

**481A.53 Chasing from dens.**

It is unlawful to have in possession while hunting or to use while hunting any ferret or any device or any substance to be used for chasing animals from their dens.

[C31, §1767-c1; C39, §1794.016; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.53]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §15](#)

C93, §481A.53

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(d\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fine, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph d

**481A.54 Shooting rifle, shotgun, pistol, or revolver over water, highway, or railroad right-of-way.**

1. A person shall not shoot any rifle on or over any of the public waters or public highways of the state or any railroad right-of-way.

2. A person shall not shoot a shotgun with a slug load, pistol, or revolver on or over a public roadway as defined in [section 321.1, subsection 65](#).

3. [This section](#) does not apply to any peace officers or military personnel in the performance of their official duties.

[C31, §1772-c2; C39, §1794.017; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.54]

[91 Acts, ch 234, §1](#)

C93, §481A.54

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(b\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph b

**481A.55 Selling game.**

1. Except as otherwise provided, a person shall not buy or sell, dead or alive, a bird or animal or any part of one which is protected by [this chapter](#), but [this section](#) does not apply to fur-bearing animals, bones of wild turkeys that were legally taken, and the skins, plumage, and antlers of legally taken game. [This section](#) does not prohibit the purchase of jackrabbits from sources outside this state. A person shall not purchase, sell, barter, or offer to purchase, sell, or barter for millinery or ornamental use the feathers of migratory game birds; and a person shall not purchase, sell, barter, or offer to purchase, sell, or barter mounted specimens of migratory game birds.

2. [Section 481A.50](#) and [this section](#) do not apply to a game species, fur-bearing animal species, or variety of fish protected under [this chapter](#) which is sold by a nonprofit corporation as a part of a meal. The number of game of a game species or fur-bearing animal species, or a variety of fish protected by [this chapter](#) which are donated by a person to a

nonprofit corporation plus any additional game of the same species or same variety of fish in the person's possession must not exceed the person's legal possession limit.

[C97, §2554; SS15, §2554; C24, 27, 31, §1769; C39, §1794.018; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.55]

[87 Acts, ch 176, §1](#); [88 Acts, ch 1216, §16](#)

C93, §481A.55

[2007 Acts, ch 28, §13](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(d\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph d

#### **481A.56 Training dogs.**

1. a. A person having a valid hunting license may train a bird dog on any game birds and a person having a valid fur harvester license may train a coonhound, foxhound, or trailing dog on any fur-bearing animals at any time of the year including during the closed season on such birds or animals. However, the animals when pursued to a tree or den shall not be further chased or removed in any manner from the tree or den. A person having a hunting license may train a dog on coyote or groundhog.

b. Only a pistol, revolver, or other gun shooting blank cartridges shall be used while training dogs during closed season except as provided in [subsection 2 of this section](#).

2. Any pen-raised game bird may be used and may be shot in the training of bird dogs. Before any bird is released or used in the training of dogs, the bird shall have attached a band procured from the commission. The commission may charge a fee for such bands but the fee shall not exceed ten cents for each band.

3. A call back pen or live trap may be used for the purpose of retrieving banded birds when released in the wild for training purposes. Any bird not so banded when taken in a call back pen or trap shall be immediately returned unbanded to the wild. All call back pens or live traps when in use shall have attached a metal tag plainly labeled with the owner's name and address. Conservation officers shall have authority to confiscate such traps when found in use and not properly labeled.

4. The commission shall have the power to adopt rules prohibiting the training of any hunting dog on any game bird, game animal, or fur-bearing animal in the wild at any time when it has been determined that such training might have an adverse effect on the populations of these species.

[C39, §1794.019; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.56]

[85 Acts, ch 10, §1](#); [86 Acts, ch 1245, §1854](#); [88 Acts, ch 1216, §17](#)

C93, §481A.56

[2011 Acts, ch 25, §143](#)

Referred to in [§481A.6A](#), [484B.10](#), [805.8B\(3\)\(c\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph c

#### **481A.56A Retrieval of wounded deer by leashed dogs.**

A person having a valid hunting license and a valid deer hunting license who has wounded a deer while hunting may use a dog to track and retrieve the wounded deer. An unarmed dog handler assisting in the recovery of a wounded deer is exempt from the licensing requirements as long as the handler is associated with the licensed hunter who wounded the deer. Any person using a dog for tracking wounded deer must maintain physical control of the dog at all times during the search by means of a maximum fifty-foot lead attached to the dog's collar or harness. The licensed hunter who wounded the deer may dispatch the deer using a legal method of take authorized by the person's deer hunting license consistent with all rules and regulations for that season. A person shall not chase, hunt, wound, or kill any animal other than the deer that the hunter is tracking, except in self-defense. Using a dog to track a wounded deer on private property is permissible with consent of the property owner. A person using a dog to track a wounded deer outside of legal deer hunting hours shall not be in possession of a firearm or archery device. The commission may adopt rules pursuant to [chapter 17A](#) to implement [this section](#).

[2020 Acts, ch 1096, §1](#); [2021 Acts, ch 43, §1](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(r\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fine, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph r

**481A.57 Possession and storage.**

A person having lawful possession of game or fur-bearing animals or their pelts lawfully taken by that person with a valid hunting or trapping license, may hold, possess, or store the game or fur-bearing animals or their pelts in an amount that does not exceed the possession limit for the game or fur-bearing animal, from the date of taking until the day before the first day of the next open season for that game or fur-bearing animal. Any person may possess up to twenty-five pounds of deer venison if the deer was obtained from a lawful source.

[C39, §1794.020; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.57]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §18](#)

C93, §481A.57

[2002 Acts, ch 1147, §2](#); [2016 Acts, ch 1021, §1](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(e\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fine, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph e

**481A.58 Trapping birds or poisoning animals.**

No person except those acting under the authority of the director shall capture or take, or attempt to capture or take, any game bird with any trap, snare, or net, nor shall any person use any poison, any medicated or poisoned food, or any other substance for the killing, capturing, or taking of any game bird or animal.

[R60, §4381; C73, §4048; C97, §2551; SS15, §2539, 2551; C24, 27, 31, §1773; C39, §1794.021; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.58]

[86 Acts, ch 1245, §1855](#)

C93, §481A.58

[2022 Acts, ch 1032, §82](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(d\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph d

**481A.59 Pigeons — interference prohibited.**

1. It shall be unlawful for any person or persons, except the owner or the owner's representatives, to shoot, kill, maim, injure, steal, capture, detain, or to interfere with any homing pigeon, commonly called "carrier pigeon", which shall at the time, have the name, initials, or other identification of its owner, stamped, marked, or attached thereon; or to remove any mark, band, or other means of identification from such pigeon which has the name, initials, or emblem of the owner stamped or marked upon it.

2. A person who violates the provisions of [this section](#) shall be punished as is provided in [section 481A.32](#).

[C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.59]

C93, §481A.59

[2018 Acts, ch 1026, §152](#)

## SUBCHAPTER IV

## GAME BREEDERS

**481A.60 Raising game — rulemaking authority.**

A person shall not raise or sell game or fur-bearing animals of the kinds protected by [this chapter](#), except rock doves and pigeons, without first procuring a game breeder's license as provided by law. The commission may adopt rules which ensure that all game birds, game animals, and fur-bearing animals handled and confined by licensed game breeders are provided with humane care and treatment. A violation of a rule adopted by the commission is a cause for license revocation. [This section](#) does not apply to governmental zoos and exhibits.

[C39, §1794.022; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.60]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §19](#); [91 Acts, ch 237, §1](#)

C93, §481A.60

Referred to in [§481A.6A](#), [805.8B\(3\)\(c\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph c

#### 481A.61 Licensed game breeders — marketing game — penalty.

1. Except as otherwise provided by law, a licensed game breeder whose original stock is obtained from a lawful source may possess any game bird, game animal, or fur-bearing animal, or any of their parts. Possession and use of the game birds, game animals, or fur-bearing animals obtained from a licensed game breeder are lawful.

2. Fur-bearing animals shall not be acquired for breeding or propagating purposes from any source unless they have been pen-raised for at least two successive generations.

3. A game breeder's license is not a license to possess, breed, propagate, sell, or dispose of any species which is defined as endangered or threatened under state law unless the species is listed on the license. Its possession, breeding, propagation, sale, and disposal are subject to all applicable state and federal statutes.

4. A licensed game breeder shall not acquire protected live game animals, game birds, their eggs, or fur-bearing animals taken from the wild within this state.

5. Game birds or game animals may be sold for food only under the following conditions:

a. The licensed game breeder shall file with the commission a facsimile of a stamp of similar type to that used by the United States department of agriculture in grading meat.

b. Licensed game breeders may sell dressed game birds or game animals to markets for resale providing each game bird or game animal has affixed upon it in a conspicuous and legible manner the imprint of the game breeder's stamp.

c. The stamp shall bear the name and number of the game breeder in letters of at least twelve point type size.

6. Markets selling stamped game shall:

a. Maintain the stamp on each game bird or game animal until the bird or animal is disposed of or sold.

b. Keep a record showing the total number of game birds or game animals sold together with the name and address of the game breeder from whom purchased and the number of game birds and animals in each purchase.

7. Markets selling stamped game, together with their records, are subject to inspection by an authorized representative of the commission at any reasonable time.

8. Violation of a provision of [this section](#) may be cause for license revocation.

[C39, §1794.023; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.61]

[86 Acts, ch 1245, §1854; 88 Acts, ch 1216, §20](#)

C93, §481A.61

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(c\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph c

#### 481A.62 Records — reports — inspection.

1. A holder of a game breeder's license shall keep the records and make the reports required by [this section](#) on forms provided by the department. The records shall be open for inspection at any reasonable time by the department or its authorized agents.

2. At the time of every sale or conveyance of an animal, animal parts, or products, the licensee shall complete a game breeder's sales receipt on forms provided by the department. The forms shall require the following information:

a. The name, address, county, and license number assigned to the breeder.

b. The name and address of the purchaser.

c. The number, species, sex, and age of the animals or birds conveyed.

3. a. Licensees shall maintain business records for all species in an annual report record book. The records shall include the following information:

(1) For each animal acquired other than by birth on the licensee's game farm, the sex and species, the date of acquisition, the number acquired, and the name and address of the source from which acquired.

(2) For each animal born on the licensee's game farm, the sex, species, date of birth, and number of any band, tag, or tattoo subsequently attached to the animal.

(3) For each animal sold or disposed of other than by death the same information required by the game breeder's sales receipt.

(4) For each animal which dies, disappears, or is destroyed on the licensee's game farm,

the sex, species, date of death, and the number of any band, tag, or tattoo attached to the animal.

b. The licensee's copies of the required sales receipts shall be kept with the record book and are considered a part of it.

c. Records required by [this section](#) shall be entered in the annual report record book within forty-eight hours of the event.

4. Each licensee shall file an annual report with the commission on or before January 31. The report shall detail the game breeder's operations during the preceding license year. The original report shall be forwarded to the department and a copy shall be retained in the breeder's file for a period of three years from the date of expiration of the breeder's last license issued. Failure to keep or submit the required records and report are grounds for a refusal to renew a license for the succeeding year.

5. An on-site inspection of facilities shall be conducted by an officer of the commission prior to the initial issuance of a game breeder's license. The facilities may be reinspected by an officer of the commission at any reasonable time.

6. Any officer of the commission may enter any place where any game bird, game animal, or fur-bearing animal is at the time located, or where it has been kept, or where the carcass of such animal may be, for the purpose of examining it in any way that may be necessary to determine whether it was or is infected with any contagious or infectious disease.

7. For the purpose of [this section](#), infectious and contagious disease includes rabies, hoof-and-mouth disease, leptospirosis, blackhead, or any other communicable disease so designated by the commission.

8. The commission may regulate or prohibit the importation into the state and exportation from the state of any species of game bird, game animal, or fur-bearing animal, domesticated or not, which in its opinion, for any reason, is determined to be detrimental to the health of animals within or without the state.

9. The commission may quarantine or destroy any game bird, game animal, or fur-bearing animal which is found to be infected with any contagious or infectious disease.

10. A licensed game breeder or other person having control of any game bird, game animal, or fur-bearing animal shall not knowingly offer for sale, sell, or barter such birds or animals which have an infectious or contagious disease, or allow those birds or animals to run at large or come in contact with any other game birds, game animals, or fur-bearing animals.

[C39, §1794.024; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.62]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §21](#)

C93, §481A.62

[2011 Acts, ch 25, §143](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(c\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph c

**481A.63 and 481A.64** Reserved.

## SUBCHAPTER V

### SCIENTIFIC COLLECTING

#### **481A.65 Licenses.**

The director, after investigation, may issue to any person a scientific collector's license, a wildlife salvage permit, educational project permit, or a wildlife rehabilitation permit. A scientific collector's license will authorize the licensee to collect for scientific purposes only, any birds, nests, eggs, or wildlife. A wildlife salvage permit will authorize the permittee to salvage for educational purposes, any birds, nests, eggs, or animals according to the rules of the department. An educational project permit authorizes the permittee to collect, keep, or possess for educational purposes birds, fish, or wildlife which are not endangered, threatened, or otherwise specially managed according to the rules of the department. A wildlife rehabilitation permit will authorize the permittee to possess for rehabilitation purposes only, any orphaned or injured wildlife according to the rules of the department.

A person to whom a license or permit is issued shall not dispose of any birds, nests, eggs, or wildlife or their parts except upon written permission of the director. The application for such licenses and permits shall be made upon blanks furnished by the department. The commission shall establish, by rule, the tenure and applicable fee for each permit authorized in [this section](#). Each holder of a license or permit shall, by January 31 of each year, file with the department a report showing all specimens collected or possessed under authority of the license or permit. Upon a showing of cause the department may enter and inspect the premises and collections authorized by [this section](#). A license or permit may be revoked by the director, after due notice, at any time for cause.

[S13, §2563-o, -p; C24, 27, 31, §1779; C39, §[1794.027](#); C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.65]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §23](#)

C93, §481A.65

[95 Acts, ch 46, §1](#)

Referred to in [§717F.7](#)

#### **481A.66 Banding or marking.**

It shall be unlawful for any person to capture birds or animals for banding purposes except that the commission may, after investigation, issue a permit to any person permitting the person to capture birds or animals for the purpose of banding or marking same for scientific study, but no such birds or animals may be killed or injured or retained in possession, but must be liberated safely and promptly. Such permit may be revoked at any time for cause. Each holder of such permit shall report to the commission once each month the number, kind of birds or animals banded, and the band numbers.

[C39, §[1794.028](#); C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.66]

C93, §481A.66

## SUBCHAPTER VI

### ANGLING LAWS

#### **481A.67 Seasons and limits — turtle harvesting restrictions.**

1. It is unlawful for a person, except as otherwise expressly provided, to take, capture, or kill fish, frogs, or turtles except during the open season established by the commission. It is unlawful during open season to take in any one day an amount in excess of the daily catch limit designated for each variety or each locality, or have in possession any variety of fish, frog, or turtle in excess of the possession limit, or have in possession any frog, fish, or turtle at any time under the minimum length or weight. The open season, possession limit, daily catch limit, and the minimum length or weight for each variety of fish, frog, or turtle shall be established by rule of the department or commission under the authority of [sections 456A.24, 481A.38, 481A.39, and 482.1](#).

2. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the natural resource commission shall adopt rules pursuant to [chapter 17A](#) establishing seasons and daily catch limits for the noncommercial harvest of turtles in any waters of the state pursuant to [section 483A.28](#). Seasons established pursuant to [this subsection](#) shall not apply to the noncommercial harvest of snapping turtles.

3. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the natural resource commission shall adopt rules pursuant to [chapter 17A](#) establishing seasons and daily catch limits for the commercial harvest of turtles in any waters of the state.

[C97, §2540; SS15, §2540; C24, 27, 31, §1731, 1732, 1733; C39, §[1794.029](#); C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.67]

[86 Acts, ch 1245, §1854](#); [88 Acts, ch 1216, §24](#)

C93, §481A.67

[2016 Acts, ch 1024, §1, 2](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(i\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph i

**481A.68 Tip-up fishing device.**

1. As used in [this section](#), “*tip-up fishing device*” means an ice fishing mechanism with an attached flag or signal to indicate fishing action, used to hold a fishing rod or pole with line and hook.

2. A person shall not use more than three tip-up fishing devices for fishing in the waters of the Mississippi river, the Missouri river, and the Big Sioux river, and their connected backwaters. A person may use two or three hooks on the same line, but the total number of hooks used by each person shall not exceed three. Each tip-up fishing device used in fishing shall have attached a tag plainly labeled with the owner’s name and address. A person shall not use a tip-up fishing device for fishing within three hundred feet of a dam or spillway or in a part of the river which is closed or posted against use of the device. Three tip-up fishing devices may be used in addition to the two lines with no more than two hooks per line, as specified in [section 481A.72](#).

3. An untagged tip-up fishing device found in use shall be confiscated by any officer appointed pursuant to [section 456A.13](#) or [456A.14](#).

[88 Acts, ch 1041, §1](#)

C89, §109.68

C93, §481A.68

[2003 Acts, ch 31, §1](#)

**481A.69 Fish designated.**

The commission may adopt rules designating game fish, commercial fish, and rough fish.

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §25](#)

C89, §109.69

C93, §481A.69

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(b\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph b

**481A.70 Reserved.****481A.71 Releasing unlawful catch.**

Any fish caught that is less than lawful minimum length or weight shall be handled with wet hands and released under water immediately with as little injury as possible.

[C39, [§1794.033](#); C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.71]

C93, §481A.71

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(b\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fine, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph b

**481A.72 Hooks and lines.**

1. Except as otherwise provided in [this chapter](#), a person shall not at any time take from the waters of the state any fish except with hook, line, and bait. A person shall not use more than three lines nor more than two hooks on each line in still fishing or trolling. In fly fishing not more than two flies may be used on one line, and in trolling and bait casting not more than two trolling spoons or artificial bait may be used on one line.

2. A person shall not leave fish line or lines and hooks in the water unattended by being out of visual sight of the lines and hooks.

3. One hook means a single, double, or treble pointed hook, and all hooks attached as a part of an artificial bait or lure shall be counted as one hook.

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §26](#)

C89, §109.72

C93, §481A.72

[2012 Acts, ch 1096, §2, 23](#); [2013 Acts, ch 90, §144](#)

Referred to in [§481A.68](#), [483A.28](#), [805.8B\(3\)\(b\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph b

**481A.73 Trotlines and tagged lines.**

In the waters of the state open to their use, a person shall not use more than five tagged lines set to take fish such as trotlines or throw lines. Such tagged lines shall not have in the

aggregate more than fifteen hooks. Each separate line when in use shall have attached a tag plainly labeled with the owner's name and address, shall be checked at least once each twenty-four hours, and a person shall not use tagged lines in a stocked lake or within three hundred feet of a dam or spillway or in a stream or portion of stream, which is closed or posted against the use of such tackle. One end of such lines shall be set from the shore and be visible above the shore waterline, but no such line shall be set entirely across a stream or body of water. Any untagged or unlawful lines when found in use shall be confiscated by any officer appointed by the director.

[C73, §4052; C97, §2540, 2542; SS15, §2540; C24, 27, 31, §1734; C39, §1794.035, 1794.037; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, §109.73, 109.75; C75, 77, 79, 81, §109.73]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §27](#)

C93, §481A.73

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(j\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph j

#### **481A.74 Where permitted.**

Trotlines and throw lines may be used in the border rivers of the state and in the inland waters. However, the commission may by rule prohibit the use of trotlines or throw lines in certain inland waters.

[C73, §4052; C97, §2540, 2542; C24, 27, 31, §1734; C39, §1794.036; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.74]

C93, §481A.74

#### **481A.75 Reserved.**

#### **481A.76 Unlawful means — exception.**

It is unlawful, except as otherwise provided, to use on or in the waters of the state any grabhook, snaghook, any kind of a net, seine, trap, firearm, dynamite, or other explosives, or poisonous or stupefying substances, lime, ashes, electricity, or hand fishing in the taking or attempting to take any fish, except that gaffhooks or landing nets may be used to assist in landing fish. The commission may permit designated fish to be taken by hand fishing, by snagging, by spearing, by bow and arrow, and with artificial light at the times and at the places as determined by rules of the commission.

[C97, §2540; SS15, §2540; C24, 27, 31, §1735; C39, §1794.038; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.76]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §28](#)

C93, §481A.76

[2000 Acts, ch 1116, §1](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(d\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fine, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph d

#### **481A.77 Reserved.**

#### **481A.78 Stocking private water.**

No private water may be stocked by the commission unless the owner agrees that such waters shall be open to the public for fishing, except that the commission may, after investigation to determine their suitability as to size, depth, living conditions for fish, and management, provide a breeding stock of fish for privately owned farm ponds on request of the owner.

[C39, §1794.040; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.78]

C93, §481A.78

Referred to in [§481A.141](#)

#### **481A.79 through 481A.82 Reserved.**

**481A.83 Prohibited stocking.**

A person shall not stock or introduce into the waters of the state a live fish, except for hooked bait, without the permission of the director. [This section](#) does not apply to privately owned ponds and lakes.

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §30](#)

C89, §109.83

C93, §481A.83

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(c\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fine, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph c

**481A.84 Frogs — catching — selling.**

1. Frogs may be taken by holders of a fishing license only and they may be used for bait or food purposes, but no person shall take more than four dozen frogs in any one day or have in possession at any one time more than eight dozen frogs. Licensed bait dealers authorized by law to sell bait may have in their possession to supply the bait needs of their customers, not more than twenty dozen frogs.

2. No person shall use any device, net, barrier or fence of any kind which prevents frogs from having free access to and egress from the water.

3. Transportation out of the state in any manner or for any purposes, of frogs taken in Iowa, is prohibited.

4. Nothing in [this chapter](#) shall be construed to prevent the purchase, sale or possession of frogs or any portion of the carcasses of frogs that have been legally taken and shipped in from without the state.

5. Nothing herein shall prevent any person from catching frogs on the person's own premises for the person's private use.

[C39, §1794.046; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.84]

C93, §481A.84

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(c\)](#)

See [§481A.67](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph c

**481A.85 Prohibited areas.**

It shall be unlawful for any person at any time, except as otherwise provided, to take any fish, minnows, frogs, or other aquatic, biological life from any state fish hatchery, nursery, or other area under the jurisdiction of the commission operated for fish production purposes.

[C39, §1794.047; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.85]

C93, §481A.85

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(e\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fine, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph e

**481A.86 Federal employees excepted.**

Authorized employees of the United States bureau of sport fisheries and wildlife are hereby authorized to conduct fish culture operations, rescue work on the boundary waters of the state, and other operations necessary for rescue and hatchery work.

[C39, §1794.048; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.86]

C93, §481A.86

SUBCHAPTER VII

TRAPPING OR HUNTING OF FUR-BEARING ANIMALS

**481A.87 Open seasons — exceptions.**

1. Except as otherwise provided, a person shall not take, capture, kill, or have in possession a fur-bearing animal or any of its parts at any time except during the open season as set by the commission.

2. A person may shoot, trap, or ensnare a fur-bearing animal when the killing, trapping, or ensnaring is for the protection of a person or public or private property with the prior permission of a duly appointed representative of the commission. If prior permission is

impractical or impossible to obtain and the fur-bearing animal represents a threat to a person, domestic animal, or private property, the fur-bearing animal may be taken without prior permission.

3. Prior permission is not required for an owner or tenant of agricultural property or an associated residence located outside the corporate limits of a city to take, capture using a cage trap or dog-proof trap, shoot, or temporarily possess, for the purpose of destroying or disposing of, a raccoon, opossum, or skunk on the property if the owner or tenant in good faith deems the animal to be a nuisance. [This subsection](#) does not apply to animals listed pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act or listed as endangered by the commission pursuant to [section 481B.3](#).

4. All fur-bearing animals and all parts thereof taken as provided in [subsection 2 or 3](#) shall be disposed of on the site or shall be relinquished to a representative of the commission.

[C97, §2553; SS15, §2553; C24, §1766; C27, 31, §1766, 1766-a1; C39, §1794.049; C46, §109.87, 109.93; C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.87]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §31](#)

C93, §481A.87

[94 Acts, ch 1148, §2; 2023 Acts, ch 38, §1](#)

Referred to in [§481A.89, 805.8B\(3\)\(l\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph “l”

Section amended

**481A.88** Reserved.

**481A.89 Permit to hold hides.**

Upon application, which shall be filed with the commission within ten days after the close of the open season, any person may be permitted to hold hides or skins of fur-bearing animals lawfully taken for a longer time than specified in [section 481A.87](#). Such application shall be verified and shall show the number and varieties of the skins or hides to be held by the applicant. The commission shall thereupon issue a permit to such applicant to hold such skins or hides, which permit shall authorize the holder to sell or otherwise dispose of such skins or hides.

[C31, §1766-c4; C39, §1794.051; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.89]

C93, §481A.89

[2023 Acts, ch 66, §117](#)

Section amended

**481A.90 Disturbing dens.**

1. A person shall not molest or disturb, in any manner, any den, lodge, or house of a fur-bearing animal or beaver dam except by written permission of an officer appointed by the director.

2. [This section](#) does not prohibit the owner from destroying a den to protect the owner’s property.

[C39, §1794.052; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.90]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §32; 89 Acts, ch 83, §23](#)

C93, §481A.90

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(d\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fine, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph d

**481A.91 Shooting or spearing.**

A person shall not kill a beaver, mink, otter, or muskrat with a shotgun or spear. A person shall not possess a beaver, mink, otter, or muskrat or the carcasses, skins, or parts of any one of those animals that have been killed with a shotgun or spear.

[C31, §1767-c2; C39, §1794.053; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.91]

C93, §481A.91

[2016 Acts, ch 1073, §137](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(d\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fine, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph d

**481A.92 Traps — disturbing dens — tags for traps.**

1. A person shall not use or attempt to use colony traps in taking, capturing, trapping, or killing any game or fur-bearing animals except muskrats as determined by rule of the commission. Box traps capable of capturing more than one game or fur-bearing animal at each setting are prohibited. A valid hunting license is required for box trapping cottontail rabbits and squirrels. All traps and snares used for the taking of fur-bearing animals shall have a metal tag attached plainly labeled with the user's name and address. All traps and snares, except those which are placed entirely under water, shall be checked at least once every twenty-four hours. Officers appointed by the department may confiscate such traps and snares found in use that are not properly labeled or checked.

2. Except as otherwise provided, a person shall not use chemicals, explosives, smoking devices, mechanical ferrets, wire, tool, instrument, or water to remove fur-bearing animals from their dens. Humane traps, or traps designed to kill instantly, with a jaw spread, as originally manufactured, exceeding eight inches are unlawful to use except when placed entirely under water.

3. Conibear type traps and snares shall not be set on the right-of-way of a public road within two hundred yards of the entry to a private drive serving a residence without the permission of the occupant.

4. A snare when set shall not have a loop larger than eight inches in horizontal measurement except for a snare set with at least one-half of the loop under water. A snare set on private land other than roadsides within thirty yards of a pond, lake, creek, drainage ditch, stream, or river shall not have a loop larger than eleven inches in horizontal measurement.

5. All snares shall have a functional deer lock which will not allow the snare loop to close smaller than two and one-half inches in diameter.

[R60, §4381; C73, §4048; C97, §2551, 2558; SS15, §2539, 2551; C24, 27, 31, §1771, 1773; C39, §1794.054; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.92]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §33](#)

C93, §481A.92

[99 Acts, ch 40, §1](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(c\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph c

**481A.93 Hunting by artificial light.**

1. A person who is in possession or control, either singly or as one of a group of persons, of any firearm, bow, or other implement or device whereby a bird or animal could be killed or taken shall not throw or cast the rays of a spotlight, headlight, or other artificial light on a highway, or in a field, woodland, or forest, for the purpose of spotting, locating, or taking or attempting to take or hunt a bird or animal.

2. [This section](#) does not apply to any of the following:

a. Deer being taken by or under the control of a local governmental body within its corporate limits pursuant to an approved special deer population control plan.

b. A person who is totally blind using a laser sight on a bow or gun while hunting, if all of the following apply:

(1) The person's total blindness is supported by medical evidence produced by an eye care professional who is an ophthalmologist, optometrist, or medical doctor. The eye care professional must certify that the person has no vision or light perception in either eye. The certification must be carried on the person of the totally blind person and made available for inspection by the department.

(2) The totally blind person is accompanied and aided by a person who is at least eighteen years of age and whose vision is not seriously impaired. The accompanying person must purchase a hunting license that includes the wildlife habitat fee as provided in rules adopted pursuant to [section 483A.1](#) if applicable. If the accompanying person is not required to have a hunting license the person is not required to pay the wildlife habitat fee. During the hunt, the accompanying adult must be within arm's reach of the totally blind person, and must be able to identify the target and the location of the laser sight beam on the target. A person other than the totally blind person shall not shoot the laser sight-equipped gun or bow.

c. A person using an infrared light source to hunt coyotes as long as the infrared light source is mounted to the method of take or to a scope mounted on the method of take. However, no person shall use an infrared light source to hunt coyotes during any established muzzleloader, bow, or shotgun deer hunting season.

d. The spotting, locating, or taking or attempting to take or hunt raccoons or other fur-bearing animals that have been treed with the aid of dogs.

[C62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.93]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §34](#)

C93, §481A.93

[98 Acts, ch 1203, §1](#); [2008 Acts, ch 1161, §20](#); [2012 Acts, ch 1096, §3, 23](#); [2018 Acts, ch 1159, §14, 28](#); [2020 Acts, ch 1021, §1](#); [2022 Acts, ch 1021, §138](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(e\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fine, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph e

## SUBCHAPTER VIII

### FUR DEALERS

#### **481A.94 Definition.**

The term “*fur dealer*” as used in [this chapter](#) shall mean any person, firm, partnership, or corporation engaged in the business of buying, bartering, trading, or otherwise obtaining raw hides or skins of fur-bearing animals.

[C39, §1794.055; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.94]

C93, §481A.94

#### **481A.95 License — reciprocity.**

1. A license shall be required of each fur dealer and each employee, agent, or representative of a fur dealer except when the employee, agent, or representative is operating solely on the premises of a licensed fur dealer. A fur dealer shall conduct business only at the location specified on the dealer’s license, at an established fur auction, at the nonadvertised residence of a licensed fur harvester, or at the place of business specified on the license of any fur dealer. A nonresident licensed fur dealer may purchase location permits to operate at locations other than at the location specified on the fur dealer’s license. A resident licensed fur dealer may obtain location permits without fee. Each location permit shall be valid only for the one location specified on the location permit and shall entitle the fur dealer and employee, agent, or representative of the licensed fur dealer to operate at that location. The commission shall, upon application and the payment of the required license fee, if any, furnish the proper license and location permits to the dealer.

2. A resident of another state shall pay the fee provided by statute for the nonresident fur dealer’s license unless that state has a reciprocity agreement with this state. The reciprocity agreement must provide that each state will charge nonresidents from the other state the same fee for the nonresident fur dealer’s license and the fee under the agreement must be less than the statutory fee of this state for nonresidents and higher than the statutory fee of this state for residents.

[C31, §1766-c3; C35, §1794-e1; C39, §1794.056; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.95]

[84 Acts, ch 1199, §1](#); [89 Acts, ch 90, §1](#); [91 Acts, ch 237, §2](#)

C93, §481A.95

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(e\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph e

#### **481A.96 Possession by dealer.**

A licensed fur dealer may have in possession at any time skins or hides of animals which have been lawfully taken.

[C31, §1766-c4; C39, §1794.058; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.96]

C93, §481A.96

**481A.97 Reports.**

Fur dealers shall keep accurate, current records of their transactions. The records shall show the number and kinds of hides and skins which have been purchased, the date of purchase, and the name and address of the seller. Such records shall be open at all reasonable times to inspection by the commission. On or before May 15 of each year, each fur dealer shall file a verified inventory with the commission. The inventory shall include all transactions for the preceding year.

[C31, §1766-c1; C39, §1794.059; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.97]

C93, §481A.97

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(d\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph d

**481A.98 Reporting violations.**

Each fur dealer shall report to the commission the name of any person, if known to the dealer, who attempts to sell any skins or hides which appear to have been unlawfully taken or possessed by that person.

[C31, §1766-c2; C39, §1794.060; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.98]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §35](#)

C93, §481A.98

[2021 Acts, ch 76, §121](#)

**481A.99 through 481A.119** Reserved.

SUBCHAPTER IX  
PROHIBITED ACTS

**481A.120 Hunting from aircraft or snowmobiles prohibited.**

A person, either singly or as one of a group of persons, shall not intentionally kill or wound, attempt to kill or wound, or pursue any animal, fowl, or fish from or with an aircraft in flight or from or with any self-propelled vehicles designed for travel on snow or ice which utilize sled type runners, skis, an endless belt tread, or wheels, or any combination thereof, and which are commonly known as snowmobiles.

[C50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.120]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §36](#)

C93, §481A.120

[2022 Acts, ch 1032, §83](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(e\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fine, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph e

**481A.121 Turtles and crayfish — taking by nonresidents or aliens.**

It shall be unlawful for any nonresident or alien to take turtles or crayfish in Iowa, by any means or method, except from the Missouri and Mississippi rivers and the Big Sioux river.

[C62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.121]

C93, §481A.121

**481A.122 Hunters' orange apparel.**

1. A person shall not hunt deer with firearms unless the person is at the time wearing one or more of the following articles of visible, external apparel, the color and material of which shall be solid blaze orange: A vest, coat, jacket, sweatshirt, sweater, shirt, or coveralls.

2. A person shall not hunt upland game birds, as defined by the department, unless the person is at the time wearing one or more of the following articles of visible, external apparel, the color and material of which shall be at least fifty percent solid blaze orange: A hat, cap, vest, coat, jacket, sweatshirt, sweater, shirt, or coveralls.

3. [This section](#) is not applicable to a person who is legally hunting with a raptor.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §109.122]

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §37](#)

C93, §481A.122

2004 Acts, ch 1115, §1; 2009 Acts, ch 144, §17; 2022 Acts, ch 1021, §139

Referred to in §805.8B(3)(d)

For applicable scheduled fine, see §805.8B, subsection 3, paragraph d

#### **481A.123 Prohibited hunting near buildings, feedlots.**

1. A person shall not discharge a firearm or shoot or attempt to shoot a game or fur-bearing animal within two hundred yards of a building inhabited by people or domestic livestock or within two hundred yards of a feedlot unless the owner or tenant has given consent. However, within the corporate limits of a city, a person may take deer with a firearm within fifty yards of a building inhabited by people or domestic livestock, or a feedlot pursuant to an approved special deer population control plan, if the person obtains permission of the owner or tenant of the building or feedlot.

2. As used in [this section](#), “*feedlot*” means a lot, yard, corral, or other area in which livestock are present and confined, for the purposes of feeding and growth before slaughter. The term does not include areas which are used for the raising of crops or other vegetation and upon which livestock are allowed to graze or feed.

3. *a.* [This section](#) does not apply to the discharge of a firearm for the purpose of target shooting on premises posted as a target shooting range that is open to the public, if the premises have been used as a target shooting range prior to the erection of a building inhabited by people or domestic livestock, or prior to the construction of a feedlot, located within two hundred yards of the target shooting range. [This subsection](#) applies only to the erection of a building inhabited by people or domestic livestock or to the construction of a feedlot located within two hundred yards of a target shooting range that is open to the public and that is identified as a target shooting range by the city, county, state, or federal government, which erection or construction occurs on or after May 14, 2004.

*b.* As used in [this subsection](#), “*target shooting*” means the discharge of a firearm at an inanimate object, for amusement or as a test of skill in marksmanship.

4. *a.* [This section](#) does not apply to the discharge of a firearm on premises identified as a public hunting area, if the premises have been identified as a public hunting area prior to the erection of a building inhabited by people or domestic livestock, or prior to the construction of a feedlot, located within two hundred yards of the public hunting area. [This subsection](#) applies only to the erection of a building inhabited by people or domestic livestock or to the construction of a feedlot located within two hundred yards of a public hunting area, which erection or construction occurs on or after May 14, 2004.

*b.* As used in [this subsection](#), “*public hunting area*” means public lands or waters available for hunting by the public, and identified as a public hunting area by the city, county, state, or federal government.

5. *a.* [This section](#) does not apply to the discharge of a firearm on a farm unit by the owner or tenant of the farm unit or by a family member of the owner or tenant of the farm unit.

*b.* As used in [this subsection](#), “*family member*”, “*farm unit*”, “*owner*”, and “*tenant*” mean the same as defined in [section 483A.24, subsection 2](#).

6. [This section](#) does not apply to the discharge of a firearm for the purpose of developing and retaining the shooting proficiency of certified law enforcement officers on premises owned by the state, a county, or a municipality, and operated by a law enforcement agency, which are not open to the general public and which were in operation prior to March 28, 2013.

7. Subject to [subsection 1](#), an owner or tenant of private premises located in the unincorporated area of a county, or a person to whom the owner or tenant has given consent, may discharge a firearm for the purpose of target shooting on those private premises. The use of such private premises for target shooting shall not be found to be in violation of a noise ordinance or declared a public or private nuisance or be otherwise prohibited under state or local law. As used in [this subsection](#), “*target shooting*” means the discharge of a firearm at an inanimate object, for amusement or as a test of skill in marksmanship.

[C77, 79, 81, §109.123]

88 Acts, ch 1216, §38; 90 Acts, ch 1194, §1; 92 Acts, ch 1149, §1

C93, §481A.123

2000 Acts, ch 1116, §2; 2004 Acts, ch 1160, §1, 2; 2007 Acts, ch 28, §14; 2013 Acts, ch 9, §1, 2; 2017 Acts, ch 69, §48

Referred to in §805.8B(3)(c)

For applicable scheduled fine, see §805.8B, subsection 3, paragraph c

#### **481A.124 Taking predominantly white deer of the whitetail species prohibited.**

1. A person shall not take a predominantly white deer in this state.
2. [This section](#) only applies to whitetail, other than farm deer that are kept as provided in [chapter 170](#).
3. A person violating [subsection 1](#) is guilty of a simple misdemeanor.  
[88 Acts, ch 1184, §1](#)  
C89, §109.124  
C93, §481A.124  
[2003 Acts, ch 149, §17, 23](#)

#### **481A.125 Intentional interference with lawful hunting, fishing, or fur-harvesting activities — penalties.**

1. As used in [this section](#), “*interfere with hunting, fishing, or fur-harvesting activities*” means one or more of the following:
  - a. To intentionally place oneself in a location where a human presence may affect the behavior of a fur-bearing animal, game, bird, or fish or the feasibility of killing or taking a fur-bearing animal, game, bird, or fish with the intent of obstructing or harassing another person who is lawfully hunting, fishing, or fur harvesting.
  - b. To intentionally create a visual, aural, olfactory, or physical stimulus for the purpose of affecting the behavior of a fur-bearing animal, game, bird, or fish with the intent of obstructing or harassing another person who is lawfully hunting, fishing, or fur harvesting.
  - c. To intentionally affect the condition or alter the placement of personal property used for the purpose of killing or taking a fur-bearing animal, game, bird, or fish with the intent of obstructing or harassing another person who is lawfully hunting, fishing, or fur harvesting.
2. A person shall not interfere with the lawful hunting, fishing, or fur-harvesting activities of another person in an area where hunting, fishing, or fur harvesting is authorized by a custodian of public property or an owner or lessee of private property.
3. A person who commits:
  - a. A first offense of interfering with hunting, fishing, or fur-harvesting activities is guilty of a simple misdemeanor.
  - b. A second or subsequent offense is punishable as a serious misdemeanor.
4. If a person who commits interfering with hunting, fishing, or fur-harvesting activities possesses a license, certificate, or permit issued by the department, the license, certificate, or permit is subject to suspension or revocation pursuant to [section 481A.134](#).
5. [This section](#) shall not prohibit a landowner, tenant, or an employee of a landowner or tenant from performing normal agricultural operations or a law enforcement officer from performing official duties.  
[91 Acts, ch 234, §2](#)  
CS91, §109.125  
C93, §481A.125  
[2000 Acts, ch 1076, §1; 2000 Acts, ch 1232, §76, 77](#)

#### **481A.125A Remote control or internet hunting — criminal and civil penalties.**

1. As used in [this section](#), “*remote control or internet hunting*” means use of a computer or other electronic device, equipment, or software to remotely control the aiming or discharge of a firearm or other weapon, allowing a person who is not physically present to take a wild animal, a game bird or ungulate kept on a hunting preserve under [chapter 484B](#), or a preserve whitetail kept on a hunting preserve under [chapter 484C](#).
2. A person shall not offer for sale, take, or assist in the taking of a wild animal, a game bird or ungulate kept on a hunting preserve under [chapter 484B](#), or a preserve whitetail kept on a hunting preserve under [chapter 484C](#), by remote control or internet hunting.

3. A person who violates [this section](#) is guilty of a serious misdemeanor. A second or subsequent violation of [this section](#) is punishable as a class “D” felony.

4. In addition, any person who violates [this section](#) is subject to a civil penalty, which may be levied by the department, of not more than ten thousand dollars for each violation of [this section](#). The moneys collected from imposition of a civil penalty shall be deposited in the state fish and game protection fund.

[2007 Acts, ch 156, §1](#)

## SUBCHAPTER X

### TAXIDERMISTRY

#### **481A.126 Taxidermy.**

1. “*Taxidermist*” as used in [this section](#) means a person engaged in the business of preserving or mounting game, fish, or fur-bearing animals as defined in [this chapter](#).

2. A license is required for the practice of taxidermy. The commission, upon application and payment of the required license fee, shall furnish proper certificates to the applicant. The director may revoke the license for good cause.

3. A licensed taxidermist may possess at any time game, fish, or fur-bearing animals which have been lawfully taken.

4. A taxidermist shall keep accurate records of its transactions showing the numbers and kinds of specimens received for preserving, the date of acquisition, and the name and address of the owner of the specimens.

5. A person shall not put or leave any game, fish, or fur-bearing animal in the custody of another person for the purpose of having taxidermy services performed unless each specimen has a tag attached which is signed by the possessor and states the address of the possessor, the total number and species of the specimens and the date the specimens were killed.

6. All transactions, tags, and specimens left in the custody of the taxidermist by another person shall be open to inspection by a conservation officer at any reasonable hour.

[\[82 Acts, ch 1010, §1\]](#)

C83, §109.126

[88 Acts, ch 1216, §39, 40](#)

C93, §481A.126

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(d\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph d

**481A.127 through 481A.129** Reserved.

## SUBCHAPTER XI

### CIVIL DAMAGES — SUSPENSIONS

#### **481A.130 Damages in addition to penalty — animals — ginseng.**

1. In addition to the penalties for violations of [this chapter](#) and [chapters 350, 461A, 481B, and 482](#), a person convicted of unlawfully selling, taking, catching, killing, injuring, destroying, or having in possession any animal, shall reimburse the state for the value of such as follows:

- a. For each elk, antelope, buffalo, or moose, two thousand five hundred dollars.
- b. For each wild turkey, two hundred dollars.
- c. For each bird or animal or the raw pelt or plumage of such bird or animal for which damages are not otherwise prescribed, fifty dollars.
- d. For each reptile, mussel, or amphibian, fifteen dollars.
- e. For each beaver, bobcat, mink, otter, red fox, gray fox, or raccoon, two hundred dollars.
- f. For each animal classified by the commission as an endangered or threatened species, one thousand dollars.

g. For each antlered deer, reimbursement shall be based on the score of the antlered deer as measured by the Boone and Crockett club's scoring system for whitetail deer as follows:

(1) 150 gross inches or less: A minimum of two thousand dollars and not more than five thousand dollars, and eighty hours of community service or, in lieu of the community service, a minimum of four thousand dollars and not more than ten thousand dollars, in an amount that is deemed reasonable by the court.

(2) More than 150 gross inches: A minimum of five thousand dollars and not more than ten thousand dollars, and eighty hours of community service or, in lieu of the community service, a minimum of ten thousand dollars and not more than twenty thousand dollars, in an amount that is deemed reasonable by the court.

h. For each antlerless deer, seven hundred fifty dollars.

i. For each swan or crane, one thousand five hundred dollars.

j. For each fish, reimbursement shall be as follows:

(1) For each fish of a species other than shovelnose sturgeon, with an established daily limit greater than twenty-five, fifteen dollars.

(2) For each fish of a species other than paddlefish and muskellunge, with an established daily limit of twenty-five or less, fifty dollars.

(3) For each shovelnose sturgeon, paddlefish, and muskellunge, one thousand dollars.

2. In addition to any other penalty, a person convicted of unlawfully harvesting wild ginseng in violation of [section 456A.24](#) shall reimburse the state at one hundred fifty percent of the ginseng's market value, as determined by the department.

3. [This section](#) does not apply to a landowner who cooperates with the department of natural resources and the department of agriculture and land stewardship to remove all whitetail from enclosed land as provided in [section 170.5](#), even if all whitetail are not removed.

4. [This section](#) does not apply to a person who is liable to pay restitution to the department pursuant to [section 481A.151](#) for injury to a wild animal caused by polluting a water of this state in violation of state law.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §109.130; 82 Acts, ch 1211, §1 – 3]

88 Acts, ch 1216, §41; 90 Acts, ch 1142, §1; 92 Acts, ch 1186, §2

C93, §481A.130

93 Acts, ch 38, §2; 98 Acts, ch 1203, §2, 3; 99 Acts, ch 58, §1; 2003 Acts, ch 149, §18, 23; 2004 Acts, ch 1124, §1; 2007 Acts, ch 28, §15; 2009 Acts, ch 144, §18 – 20; 2022 Acts, ch 1137, §1, 2

Referred to in §481A.131, 481A.132, 481A.133, 716.8

#### **481A.131 Judgment — execution.**

1. In each case of conviction of unlawfully taking, catching, killing, injuring, destroying, or having in possession any fish, game, or fur-bearing animal, the court shall enter a judgment in favor of the state of Iowa for liquidated damages in an amount as provided in [section 481A.130](#). If two or more persons who have acted together are convicted of the unlawful taking, catching, killing, injuring, destroying, or having possession of any fish, game, or fur-bearing animal, the judgment shall be entered against them jointly.

2. Any liquidated damages assessed under [this section](#) and [section 481A.130](#) shall be paid to the clerk of court. The clerk of court shall remit the damages paid to the department of natural resources. The department of natural resources shall credit such damages to the state fish and game protection fund.

3. The return of any uninjured fish, game, or fur-bearing animal which has been unlawfully taken, caught, or possessed, to the place where taken or caught or to any other place approved by the commission, shall constitute the discharge of any liquidated damages provided under [section 481A.130](#).

4. Civil suits for the collection of judgments may be prosecuted by the attorney general or by county attorneys.

[C75, 77, 79, 81, §109.131; 82 Acts, ch 1211, §4]

86 Acts, ch 1245, §1854

C93, §481A.131

[2012 Acts, ch 1118, §7](#)

Referred to in [§716.8](#)

**481A.132 Service of process or arrest — pendency of damage claim.**

Service of process upon or arrest of any person charged with provisions of [this chapter](#) for which damages may be assessed pursuant to [section 481A.130](#), shall serve as notice of the pendency of the liquidated damage claim. Trial on the criminal charge may be separated from the determination of the liquidated damage claim in the discretion of the court or by the request of the defendant, but upon conviction of the defendant in the criminal case, the only issue to be determined by the court on the liquidated damage claim is the fact of such conviction.

[C77, 79, 81, §109.132]

C93, §481A.132

**481A.133 Suspension of licenses, certificates, and permits.**

A person who is assessed damages pursuant to [section 481A.130](#) shall immediately surrender all licenses, certificates, and permits to hunt, fish, or trap in the state to the department. The licenses, permits, and certificates, and the privileges associated with them shall remain suspended until the assessed damages and any accrued interest are paid in full. Upon payment of the assessed damages and any accrued interest, the suspension shall be lifted. Interest shall begin to accrue as of the date of judgment at a rate of ten percent per year.

[90 Acts, ch 1198, §2](#)

C91, §109.133

C93, §481A.133

[2007 Acts, ch 28, §16](#)

## SUBCHAPTER XII

### CANCELLATIONS, SUSPENSIONS, REVOCATIONS, AND PENALTIES

**481A.134 Authority to cancel, suspend, or revoke license — point system.**

The department shall establish rules pursuant to [chapter 17A](#) providing for the suspension or revocation of licenses issued by the department. The rules may include procedures for summary cancellation of a license based on documentation that the licensee failed to pay the applicable fee for the license. For purposes of determining when to suspend or revoke a license issued by the department under [this section](#), the department shall adopt a point system pursuant to [chapter 17A](#) for the purpose of weighing the seriousness of violations of the provisions of [this chapter](#) or [chapter 481B, 482, 483A, 484A, or 484B](#), or of committing trespass as defined in [section 716.7](#) while hunting deer, other than farm deer as defined in [section 170.1](#) or preserve whitetail as defined in [section 484C.1](#). The weighted scale may be amended from time to time as experience dictates.

[90 Acts, ch 1198, §3](#)

C91, §109.134

[92 Acts, ch 1160, §19](#)

C93, §481A.134

[2004 Acts, ch 1070, §1; 2007 Acts, ch 28, §17](#)

Referred to in [§481A.125](#)

**481A.135 Repeat offender — records, enforcement, and penalties.**

1. The commission shall establish by rule, a recordkeeping system and other administrative procedures necessary to administer [this section](#).

2. A person who pleads guilty or is convicted of a violation of any provision of [this chapter](#) or [chapter 481B, 482, 483A, 484A, or 484B](#), or trespass as defined in [section 716.7](#) while hunting deer, other than farm deer as defined in [section 170.1](#) or preserve whitetail as defined in [section 484C.1](#), while the person's license or licenses are suspended or revoked is guilty of

a simple misdemeanor if the person has no other violations within the previous three years which occurred while the person's license or licenses have been suspended or revoked.

3. A person who pleads guilty or is convicted of a violation of any provision of [this chapter](#) or [chapter 481B](#), [482](#), [483A](#), [484A](#), or [484B](#), or trespass as defined in [section 716.7](#) while hunting deer, other than farm deer as defined in [section 170.1](#) or preserve whitetail as defined in [section 484C.1](#), while the person's license or licenses are suspended or revoked is guilty of a serious misdemeanor if the person has one other violation within the previous three years which occurred while the person's license or licenses have been suspended or revoked.

4. A person who pleads guilty or is convicted of a violation of any provision of [this chapter](#) or [chapter 481B](#), [482](#), [483A](#), [484A](#), or [484B](#), or trespass as defined in [section 716.7](#) while hunting deer, other than farm deer as defined in [section 170.1](#) or preserve whitetail as defined in [section 484C.1](#), while the person's license or licenses are suspended or revoked is guilty of an aggravated misdemeanor when the person has had two or more convictions within the previous three years which occurred while the person's license or licenses have been suspended or revoked.

5. An indictment or trial information for a violation requiring an enhanced penalty under [this section](#) shall specify the underlying violation committed by the person.

[90 Acts, ch 1198, §4](#)

[C91, §109.135](#)

[92 Acts, ch 1160, §20](#)

[C93, §481A.135](#)

[2007 Acts, ch 28, §18; 2010 Acts, ch 1140, §22](#)

#### **481A.136 Unlawful commercialization of wildlife — penalty.**

1. A person shall not buy or sell a wild animal or part of a wild animal if the wild animal is taken, transported, or possessed in violation of the laws of this state, or a rule adopted by the department.

2. A person violating [subsection 1](#) is guilty of a serious misdemeanor.

[92 Acts, ch 1186, §3](#)

#### **481A.137 Abandonment of dead or injured wildlife.**

1. While taking or attempting to take game or fur-bearing animals, a person shall not abandon an injured game or fur-bearing animal without making a reasonable effort to retrieve the animal from the field. A person shall not leave a useable portion of game or a fur-bearing animal in the field.

2. A person violating [subsection 1](#) is subject to a scheduled fine as provided in [section 805.8B, subsection 3](#), paragraph "e".

3. As used in [this section](#), "useable portion" means the following:

a. For game, that part of an animal which is customarily processed for human consumption.

b. For a fur-bearing animal, the fur or hide of the animal.

4. [This section](#) does not apply to pigeons or crows.

[92 Acts, ch 1149, §2; 2001 Acts, ch 137, §5](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(e\)](#)

**481A.138 through 481A.140** Reserved.

## SUBCHAPTER XIII

### AQUACULTURE

#### **481A.141 Aquaculture — license required.**

1. A person shall not engage in the business of aquaculture until that person has applied for and has been issued an aquaculture unit license from the department. The application period extends from January 1, or the date of the application, through December 31. A license shall not be issued to operate an aquaculture unit on private or nonmeandered lakes

and streams and ponds that may become stocked with fish from public waters or natural migration. A pond stocked by the department pursuant to [section 481A.78](#) shall not be used for aquaculture purposes.

2. The following persons must obtain an aquaculture unit license:

a. A person who, for commercial purposes, rears or maintains live animals or plants for food, bait, or for stocking in waters of the state.

b. An owner or operator of a pond where guests or customers are allowed to fish for a fee, or allowed to take fish without regard to angling licenses, seasons, gear restrictions, or bag limits.

3. The cultivation and sale of tropical fish species or ornamental aquatic plants or animals, not utilized for human consumption or bait purposes, but maintained in closed systems and utilized by the pet industry or hobbyists are exempt from license requirements.

[92 Acts, ch 1216, §3](#)

#### **481A.142 Licensed aquaculture units — activities allowed.**

A holder of an aquaculture unit license may:

1. Possess, propagate, buy, sell, deal in, and transport the aquatic organisms produced from breeding stock legally acquired, including minnows.

2. Sell fish for stocking purposes within or outside the state. Fish which are nonindigenous to Iowa shall not be received or sold in the state unless the aquaculture unit has obtained an importation permit from the department. The department shall establish, by rule, requirements governing importation, and shall include a list of approved aquaculture species. Failure to comply with [this subsection](#) will result in loss of license and a violator is subject to the scheduled fine provided in [section 805.8B](#).

3. Hold, feed, and sell carp, buffalofish, and other fish legally taken by commercial fishers.

4. Harvest aquatic life on land under control of the aquaculture unit with commercial devices without obtaining any permits for the devices.

5. a. Sell bait, including minnows and frogs, propagated or raised within the licensed unit without having to obtain a bait dealer's license. However, aquaculture units wishing to take bait from areas other than their licensed units must also obtain a bait dealer's license.

b. A nonresident aquaculture unit licensee shall be limited to selling bait at wholesale unless the home state of the nonresident licensee allows residents of this state to sell bait at retail.

6. Take any gull, tern, or merganser within the bounds of the unit. An owner or operator of the licensed aquaculture unit, however, must first obtain a permit for this activity from the department or the United States fish and wildlife service. Each permittee shall file an annual report with the department which itemizes the birds taken during the period covered by the permit, and dispose of birds taken according to methods established by the department. The department shall not issue a subsequent permit to any person failing to file this report.

[92 Acts, ch 1216, §4; 2001 Acts, ch 137, §5; 2004 Acts, ch 1029, §1; 2012 Acts, ch 1118, §8](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(d\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph d

#### **481A.143 Licensed aquaculture units — requirements.**

1. Each licensed aquaculture unit shall prepare an annual report of all fish bought, sold, and shipped. The records shall include species name as well as the weight, volume, or count of fish involved. Reports shall be filed on or before December 31 of each year for the preceding year. The department may refuse to renew a unit license if the annual report is not provided.

2. Each licensed aquaculture unit shall secure its breeding stock from licensed aquaculture units or licensed aquaculturists in the state or from lawful sources outside the state. An aquaculture unit shall not secure stock in any other manner.

3. A shipment of fish must be accompanied by a duplicate of the sales invoice showing the name and address of the producer, date of shipment, the species being transported, the weight, volume, or count of each species being shipped and the name and address of the consignee. A duplicate of the sales invoice must be retained by the aquaculture unit or aquaculturist for one year following the sale.

4. A licensed aquaculture unit shall comply with all state laws pertaining to possession, taking, or selling of bait which it handles. The director may revoke the unit license of any person violating [this subsection](#) or a rule adopted by the department.

5. Minnow and bait boxes and tanks within licensed aquaculture units shall be open for inspection by the department at all times.

6. Aquaculture units shall not import live fish, viable eggs, or semen of any species of the salmonid family (trout, salmon, or char) and ictalurid family (catfishes and bullheads), including hybrids, unless the owner or operator possesses a fish importation permit. For the species listed in [this subsection](#) only, importation permits shall not be issued unless the fish, eggs, or semen have been inspected by the department and found to be free of disease detrimental to the state's fishery resources. The owner or operator of an aquaculture unit must provide a statement certifying the fish listed in [this subsection](#) or their eggs or semen to be disease free, and include the date of inspection. Certification is not required for other fish species, but the department may require inspection at any time. The department shall establish, by rule, those diseases detrimental to the state's fishery resources and the location of authorized certified pathologists for inspection.

[92 Acts, ch 1216, §5](#)

#### **481A.144 Licensed bait dealers — requirements.**

1. A person shall not sell minnows, frogs, crayfish, or salamanders for fish bait without first obtaining a bait dealer's license from the department upon payment of the license fee. A licensee shall comply with all laws pertaining to taking, possessing, and selling of bait handled by the licensee. If convicted of violating a provision of [this chapter](#) or a rule adopted pursuant to [this chapter](#), a licensee shall forfeit the licensee's bait dealer license upon demand of the director.

2. When taking bait from lakes and streams, bait dealers shall take only the size of bait which they can use, and shall return all small minnows and frogs to the water immediately.

3. A minnow and bait box and a tank shall be open to inspection by the department at all times. A licensee shall have tanks and bait boxes of sufficient size and with proper aeration to keep the bait alive and prevent substantial loss.

4. A person shall not take or attempt to take minnows for commercial purposes from any waters of the state or shall not transport minnows without first obtaining a bait dealer's license. However, a person taking or transporting minnows for personal use is not required to have a bait dealer's license.

[92 Acts, ch 1216, §6](#); [93 Acts, ch 99, §2](#); [2012 Acts, ch 1118, §9](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(k\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraph k

#### **481A.145 Taking and selling of minnows and other bait — regulations.**

1. Except for species listed as threatened or endangered under [chapter 481B](#), a licensed bait dealer may take sufficient bait from lakes and streams of this state that are not closed to the taking of bait, to supply the licensee's customers for hook and line fishing if the licensee is present while the bait is being taken.

2. Except as otherwise provided in [this chapter](#), a person shall not carry, transport, ship, or cause to be carried, transported, or shipped, any minnows for the purpose of sale beyond the boundaries of the state. Minnows which are bred, hatched, propagated, or raised on a licensed aquaculture unit may be transported outside the state.

3. A person shall not transport, use, sell or offer to sell for bait or introduce into any inland waters of this state or into any waters from which the waters of the state may become stocked, any minnows or fish of the carp, quillback, gar, or dogfish species. Fish of the carp, quillback, gar, or dogfish species may be returned to the waters from which they are taken. A person shall not possess live gizzard shad at any lake in this state.

4. Minnow traps not exceeding thirty-six inches in length may be used when the taking of minnows is allowed. Each trap, when in use, shall have a metal tag attached plainly labeled with the owner's name and address.

5. A person shall not use a minnow dip net which exceeds four feet in diameter, a cast net

which exceeds ten feet in diameter, or a minnow seine which exceeds twenty feet in length or has a mesh size smaller than one-quarter inch bar measure. Licensed bait dealers may obtain a permit from the department to use minnow seines longer than twenty feet, but not exceeding fifty feet in length.

6. The department may designate certain lakes and streams, and parts of them, from which minnow populations should be protected for the best management of the lakes or streams. If an investigation of a lake or stream or a portion of a lake or stream by the department indicates that the minnow population should be protected, the lake or stream or a portion of the lake or stream shall be closed to the taking of minnows for a period of time deemed advisable by the department.

[92 Acts, ch 1216, §7](#); [93 Acts, ch 99, §3 – 5](#)

Referred to in [§805.8B\(3\)\(e\)](#), [805.8B\(3\)\(d\)](#), [805.8B\(3\)\(k\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fines, see [§805.8B](#), subsection 3, paragraphs c, d, and k

#### **481A.146 Authority of the director.**

The director may take any fish from the public waters of the state, at any time and in any manner, for the purpose of propagation or restocking other waters, or exchanging with fish and wildlife agencies of other states, the federal government, or licensed aquaculture units.

[92 Acts, ch 1216, §8](#)

#### **481A.147 Theft of fish.**

All fish in an aquaculture unit are private property and are not the property of the state, and the theft of fish from an aquaculture unit is punishable as provided in [section 714.2](#).

[92 Acts, ch 1216, §9](#)

**481A.148 through 481A.150** Reserved.

## SUBCHAPTER XIV

### POLLUTION — RESTITUTION

#### **481A.151 Restitution for pollution causing injury to wild animals.**

1. A person who is liable for polluting a water of this state in violation of state law, including [this chapter](#), shall also be liable to pay restitution to the department for injury caused to a wild animal by the pollution. The amount of the restitution shall also include the department's administrative costs for investigating the incident. The administration of [this section](#) shall not result in a duplication of damages collected by the department under [section 455B.392, subsection 1](#), paragraph "a", subparagraph (3).

2. The commission shall adopt rules providing for procedures for investigations and the administrative assessment of restitution amounts. The rules shall establish an opportunity to appeal a departmental action including by a contested case proceeding under [chapter 17A](#). A final administrative decision assessing an amount of restitution may be enforced by the attorney general at the request of the director.

3. Rules adopted by the commission shall provide for methods used to determine the extent of an injury and the monetary values for the loss of injured wild animals based on species.

a. The rules shall provide for methods used to count dead fish and to calculate restitution values. The rules may incorporate methods and values published by the American fisheries society. To every extent practicable, the values shall be based on the estimates of lost recreational angler opportunities where applicable. As an alternative method of valuation, the rules may provide that for fish species that are protected by catch limits, possession limits, size limits, or closed seasons applicable to anglers, liquidated damages apply. The amount of the liquidated damages shall not exceed fifteen dollars per fish. For fish species that are classified by the commission as endangered or threatened, the rules may establish liquidated damages not to exceed one thousand dollars per fish.

b. The rules shall provide guidelines for estimating the extent of loss of a species that is

affected by a pollution incident but which would not be practical to count in sample areas. The rules may establish liquidated damage amounts for species whose replacement cost is difficult to determine.

4. Moneys collected by the department in restitution shall be deposited into the state fish and game protection fund. The moneys shall be used exclusively to support restoration or improvement of fisheries, including but not limited to aquatic habitat improvement projects as provided in rules adopted by the commission. However, moneys collected from restitution paid for investigative costs shall be used as determined by the director.

[2002 Acts, ch 1137, §58, 71](#)

Referred to in [§481A.130](#)