



# Bird Hunting Preserve Regulations

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This publication provides a summary of Wisconsin's laws, which pertain to individuals who possess a bird hunting preserve license. It is not a complete set of the laws.

## LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

With the 2003 changes in the captive wildlife laws it is now legal to raise non-native upland game birds without a DNR license or permit. Unless restricted by local ordinances or regulations under the Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protections (DATCP), anyone can raise non-native game birds such as pheasants or chukar partridge for food, selling, or just for pleasure. However, if non-native game birds are to be purchased, possessed and released into the wild for commercial hunting, a bird hunting preserve license is required.

A bird hunting preserve license allows you to possess, propagate, stock, release and hunt the species of game bird approved and listed on the license. This is a commercial license, which also allows the holder to purchase and sell any of the species listed on the license and to charge others to hunt or take released birds.

## CLASSES OF BIRD HUNTING PRESERVES

There are 2 types of bird hunting preserve licenses, a **Class A bird hunting preserve** license and a **Class B bird hunting preserve** license. There are rules and regulations that apply to both types of licenses and there are rules and regulations that are specific to each license type. This section will explain the differences to help you determine which license to apply for.

### Class A Bird Hunting Preserve

**\$300 Initial Application/\$200 Renewal**

Class A bird hunting preserves tend to be larger operations. A class A preserve can consist of several non-contiguous (not touching) parcels provided each of the parcels is at least 80 acres in size and they are in the same county or in adjacent counties. A class A preserve is required to stock at least 1,001 pheasants each license year. Class A bird hunting preserves may hunt both hen and rooster pheasant year round, even if the preserve is located within a DNR pheasant management zone.

### Class B Bird Hunting Preserve

**\$200 Initial Application/\$100 Renewal**

Class B bird hunting preserves can be as small as 40 acres in size. All acreage in a class B preserves must be in one continuous parcel. If licensed for pheasants, a class B preserve must stock at least 1 pheasant per 4 acres each license year.

Example: if you had an 80-acre class B bird hunting preserve you would need to stock at least 20 pheasants annually (80 divided by 4 = 20).

However, a class B preserve cannot stock more than 1,000 pheasants in any license year but may upgrade to a class A bird hunting preserve license by contacting the DNR. If a class B bird hunting preserve holder chooses not to be licensed for pheasants they do not need to stock pheasants. If not licensed for pheasants a person may only hunt pheasants during the normal pheasant season and must follow all rules on the taking of pheasant, including bag limits, small game license and stamp.

Class B preserves may not allow the hunting or taking of hen pheasants beginning on December 15 each year and ending on the following March 31.

## SPECIES AND STOCKING

When filing an application you may request permission to hunt the following species of live captive wild birds:

1. Ring-necked or reeves pheasant
2. Bobwhite quail (*and other species of quail of the subfamily odontophorinae*)
3. Gray partridge
4. Chukar partridge
5. Red-legged partridge
6. Mallard duck
7. Wild turkeys, if the bird hunting preserve is located outside a wild turkey hunting zone.

These 7 species are the **ONLY** species that may be stocked and hunted on a bird hunting preserve. The DNR will list the approved species on the license. You may only hunt those species that are listed on your license, unless in compliance with normal hunting seasons, license and stamp requirements. Additional species may be added at a later date, but only through a written request sent to and approved by the DNR.

All birds must be obtained from a legal source. It is not legal to shoot, kill, or take more game birds of each species than are stocked. Birds must be stocked before they are hunted. Example: If you stock 40 pheasants you may only kill or take 40 or fewer pheasants on the preserve. If you want to kill more than 40 you have to stock additional birds.

All birds that are released must be at least 12 weeks of age, of high quality stock, fully feathered and originally have come from a flock of a person who participates in the national poultry improvement plan (NPIP). You may raise your own birds or purchase them from a person who has an NPIP approved flock. If you plan to bring game birds into Wisconsin from other states the birds must be accompanied by a health certificate that shows the birds originated from an NPIP flock.

**Note:** More information on NPIP can be obtained from the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection by calling 608-224-4872.

## **GENERAL BIRD HUNTING PRESERVE REGULATIONS**

1. Individual tagging of birds is not required and tags for birds are not provided by the DNR. You may determine how to mark the birds if you so desire.
2. Signs that designate the property as a licensed bird hunting preserve are not required nor provided by the DNR. You may post your property, as you deem necessary to inform others that it is a licensed bird hunting preserve.
3. A person hunting approved species of birds on a bird hunting preserve does not need a hunting license or stamp and is not subject to closed season restrictions or bag limits unless hunting mallards (see section on Mallard Ducks).
4. A person hunting anything other than the approved species of birds on the bird hunting preserve lands must have a valid hunting license and must comply with all season restrictions, bag limits and license requirements.
5. Not more than 640 acres may be licensed under a single preserve, however more than one license may be issued to the same person.
6. The discharge of firearms must be legal on the entire licensed acreage.
7. Any animals that are injured shall be cared for or killed in a humane manner.
8. Bird dog training or trials are allowed on a bird hunting preserve without a bird dog training or trial license.

Bird hunting preserves that are located within ¼ mile of a state or federal wildlife area, public hunting grounds or refuge which is managed for pheasants may be licensed for pheasants. However hunting of pheasants under the authority of a bird hunting preserve license is not allowed on the portion of the preserve that is within a ¼ mile from the boundary of the DNR managed area. In other words, you must be at least ¼ mile from the edge of the managed area before you can hunt pheasants under the bird hunting preserve license authority.

## **SPECIAL REGULATIONS FOR MALLARD DUCKS**

Because they are migratory waterfowl, mallard ducks have special regulations. Only mallards that are bred in captivity may be possessed. By 6 weeks of age all mallard ducks must be identified in one of the following federally approved ways:

1. Removal of the hind toe of the right foot.
2. Pinioning of a wing provided the metacarpal bones of one wing are removed, rendering the bird permanently incapable of flight.
3. Banding of one metatarsus with a seamless metal band.
4. Tattooing of an easily identifiable number or letter or number letter combination on the web of one foot.

Mallard ducks must be housed in pens that are covered and must prevent free-roaming wild waterfowl from being attracted to the pens with your captive-bred mallards.

All hunting rules (except the state license requirements) that apply to hunting waterfowl, including the open and closed season dates, daily bag and possession limits, transportation, firearms and ammunition restrictions apply to the hunting of captive-reared mallards on a bird hunting preserve. Refer to the current Wisconsin Migratory Bird Hunting regulations for the specific rules.

## **ANIMAL HEALTH AND HUSBANDRY STANDARDS**

You are required to keep native game birds in pens that are strong enough to hold the birds and prevent predators from getting inside. Pens should also be covered to keep other animals such as wild ducks, owls and hawks out and provide enough space for birds to move around freely.

### **Feeding**

Captive game birds must be fed at least once each day, unless otherwise restricted by a veterinarian or as otherwise required to provide adequate care.

- ❖ The food must be clean, nutritious, and given in a large enough amount to maintain the normal condition and weight of the animal.
- ❖ The diet must be appropriate for the individual animal's age and condition.

### **Watering**

If clean drinking water is not continually available to the captive wild animals, it must be offered to the animals as often as necessary to ensure their health and well being, but not less than twice daily for at least one hour each time, unless restricted by a veterinarian.

## Food and Water Containers

Containers must be easily accessible for all captive game birds, must be located so as to reduce the chance of contamination by animal waste and pests, and be protected from rain and snow. Containers should be made of a durable material that may be easily cleaned and sanitized or be disposable.

## PEN SPECIFICATIONS

### General Facility Requirements:

1. Pens must be structurally sound, kept in good repair, protect the captive animals from injury, hold the animals securely and prevent other animals from getting inside.
2. Areas used for storing food or bedding must be free of trash, animal waste, weeds, insects, etc. to prevent rotting and spread of disease.
3. All surfaces in a pen, including houses, dens, shelters, fixtures and objects must be easily cleaned or removed or replaced when worn or dirty. Surfaces must be free of rust and jagged edges or sharp points.
4. If raised floors are used they must be constructed so the animals' feet cannot pass through the openings in the floor. If the floor is constructed of wire a solid resting surface large enough to hold all the animals at the same time must be provided.
5. Animal and food wastes, bedding, debris, garbage, water, other fluids and wastes and dead animals must be removed and disposed of safely, regularly and frequently.
6. Standing puddles of water must be drained or mopped up after cleaning or rain so the animals remain dry.
7. Trash containers in food storage and preparation areas must be leak proof with tightly fitting lids. The lids should remain on unless the caretaker is using them.
8. Supplies of food and bedding should be stored in a way that protects them from spoilage, contamination and pest infestation. You must be able to clean around and under the supplies. Foods requiring refrigeration must be stored in the refrigerator. All open food should be kept in a leak proof container with a tightly fitting lid.
9. To promote the health of the captive game birds an effective program for the control of insects, external parasites and birds and mammals that are pests needs to be developed and followed.

### General Pen and Shelter Requirements:

1. Pens must be large enough to allow each captive game bird to make normal position changes with plenty of freedom of movement.
2. Outdoor facilities must provide shelter large enough to fit all animals inside comfortably.
3. Shelters need 4 sides, a roof and a floor.
4. Outdoor shelter for captive wild birds may consist of natural vegetation, which provides protection from the sun, wind, rain and snow.
5. A wind and rain break must be provided at the shelter entrance.
6. Shelters need clean dry bedding material if the temperature falls below 50°F. Additional bedding is needed if temperatures fall below 35°F.
7. Metal barrels, cars, refrigerators, freezers and similar objects **may not** be used for shelter.
8. Shelters should be ventilated to provide for animal health and well being, and to minimize odors, drafts, ammonia levels and moisture. Ventilation can be provided by windows, doors, vents, fans or air conditioning.
9. Shade large enough to contain all the captive wild animals at one time must be provided to protect them from the sun.

## Transportation Pens

When transporting birds you must have them in a container such as a cage, carton or crate that will hold the animal securely and comfortably. The container must be strong enough to handle the hardships of transportation. Adequate ventilation is required. Birds should be provided with shade if possible.

## RECEIPTS, RECORD-KEEPING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

When birds are removed from the bird hunting preserve property a receipt or tag must accompany them, this includes the following:

1. bird hunting preserve license or owners name;
2. address and license number of the preserve;
3. the number and species of the birds;
4. and the date of harvest or transfer to another.

You must keep a record by date of all captive wild birds stocked or released on your bird hunting preserve. The record must include:

1. the date of the activity;
2. number of birds stocked or released, by species;
3. number and species of birds harvested; and
4. the number of bobwhite quail, mallards and wild turkey purchased, sold, obtained or transferred.

These records must be kept at the bird hunting preserve and made available for inspection by DNR personnel.

You must submit an annual report to the DNR by June 30<sup>th</sup> each year. The report must include the total number of all birds stocked and taken or killed. The number of bobwhite quail, mallards and wild turkey purchased or obtained in some other manner, sold, shipped or transferred, propagated and the number of these native game birds possessed on the date you file the report.

The DNR will send you a report form every year with your renewal application. An initial activity report form will be mailed to you with your license. You may copy this form as needed. If you have your own record-keeping system, forms or computer program you may use that system provided the records contain all the information required above.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for a bird hunting preserve license contact your local DNR office, call the Bureau of Customer Service and Licensing at (608) 266-0862 or write to:

**Department of Natural Resources  
Bureau of Customer Service and Licensing  
P.O. Box 7924  
Madison, WI 53707-8924**

Applications must be filled out completely and mailed along with a copy of a plat map with the EXACT area you are seeking to license outlined or highlighted. Contact your local municipality, county government or library for a copy of your plat map. If any portion of the property is leased, a written lease is required. Requirements for a written lease appear on the application.

## FEES

Class A bird hunting permit initial fee is \$300.00; annual renewal \$200.00.

Class B bird hunting preserve license initial fee is \$200.00; annual renewal \$100.00.

If you are licensing more than 640 acres you will need an additional license(s). The fee for any additional license(s) will be half price.

## Effective Period

All bird hunting preserve licenses are effective from the date of issue until the following May 30<sup>th</sup>. You must meet the pheasant stocking requirements for the license year regardless of when you purchase your license.

## CAPTIVE WILDLIFE LAWS

You may purchase a complete and current copy of State Statute Chapter 169 and Natural Resources Administrative Code Chapter NR 16, by contacting: Document Sales, 202 South Thornton Avenue, P.O. Box 7840, Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7840, 608-266-3358; or on the internet at the Revisor of Statutes Bureau, <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/stats.html>.

## CAPTIVE WILDLIFE PAMPHLETS

The following additional information pamphlets may be obtained by contacting the DNR Bureau of Customer Service and Licensing:

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| • Captive Wild Animal Farm                     | PUB-CS-17        |
| • Wild Fur Farm                                | PUB-CS-18        |
| • <b>Bird Hunting Preserve</b>                 | <b>PUB-CS-19</b> |
| • Pen Specification & Transportation Standards | PUB-CS-20        |
| • Deer Farm Fencing                            | PUB-CS-21        |
| • Dog Training & Trialing                      | PUB-WM-444       |
| • Hound Dog Training Enclosures                | PUB-WM-477       |

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This publication is available in braille, audio cassette, large print or computer format upon request. To order, call 608-266-8204.

