



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB3219

Introduced 2/18/2025, by Rep. Wayne A Rosenthal

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

520 ILCS 5/1.2t-2 new

520 ILCS 5/1.2t-3 new

520 ILCS 5/2.25

from Ch. 61, par. 2.25

520 ILCS 5/2.33

520 ILCS 5/1.2bb rep.

Amends the Wildlife Code. Authorizes the taking of deer with a wildlife rifle (rather than a single shot centerfire rifle). Defines the term "wildlife rifle" as a centerfire rifle that can hold up to 3 rounds in the magazine and chamber combined. Defines the term "straight-walled centerfire cartridge" as a cartridge that is used as ammunition in a centerfire and that has a diameter that is the same across its length and a metallic casing that extends to the projectile. Repeals the definition of and references to "single shot".

LRB104 06451 BDA 16487 b

1 AN ACT concerning wildlife.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Wildlife Code is amended by changing
5 Sections 1.2bb, 2.25, and 2.33 and by adding Sections 1.2t-2
6 and 1.2t-3 as follows:

7 (520 ILCS 5/1.2t-2 new)

8 Sec. 1.2t-2. Straight-walled centerfire cartridge.
9 "Straight-walled centerfire cartridge" means a cartridge that
10 is used as ammunition in a centerfire and that has a diameter
11 that is the same across its length and a metallic casing that
12 extends to the projectile.

13 (520 ILCS 5/1.2t-3 new)

14 Sec. 1.2t-3. Wildlife rifle. "Wildlife rifle" means a
15 centerfire rifle that can hold up to 3 rounds in the magazine
16 and chamber combined.

17 (520 ILCS 5/2.25) (from Ch. 61, par. 2.25)

18 Sec. 2.25. It shall be unlawful for any person to take deer
19 except (i) with a shotgun, handgun, wildlife ~~single-shot~~
20 ~~centerfire~~ rifle, or muzzleloading rifle or (ii) as provided
21 by administrative rule, with a bow and arrow, during the open

1 season of not more than 14 days which will be set annually by
2 the Director between the dates of November 1st and December
3 31st, both inclusive, or a special 3-day, youth-only season
4 between the dates of September 1 and October 31. For the
5 purposes of this Section, legal handguns and rifles are
6 limited to centerfire handguns that are ~~either a single shot~~
7 ~~or~~ revolver and centerfire wildlife rifles ~~that are single~~
8 ~~shot~~. The only legal ammunition for a centerfire handgun or
9 rifle is a bottleneck centerfire cartridge of .30 caliber or
10 larger with a case length not exceeding one and two-fifths
11 inches, or a straight-walled centerfire cartridge of .30
12 caliber or larger, both of which must be available as a factory
13 load with the published ballistic tables of the manufacturer
14 showing a capability of at least 500 foot pounds of energy at
15 the muzzle. The barrel of a handgun shall be at least 4 inches.
16 Full metal jacket bullets may not be used to harvest deer.

17 The Department shall make administrative rules concerning
18 management restrictions applicable to the firearm and bow and
19 arrow season.

20 It shall be unlawful for any person to take deer except
21 with a bow and arrow during the open season for bow and arrow
22 set annually by the Director between the dates of September
23 1st and January 31st, both inclusive.

24 It shall be unlawful for any person to take deer except
25 with (i) a muzzleloading rifle or (ii) bow and arrow during the
26 open season for muzzleloading rifles set annually by the

1 Director.

2 The Director shall cause an administrative rule setting
3 forth the prescribed rules and regulations, including bag and
4 possession limits and those counties of the State where open
5 seasons are established, to be published in accordance with
6 Sections 1.3 and 1.13 of this Act.

7 The Department may establish separate harvest periods for
8 the purpose of managing or eradicating disease that has been
9 found in the deer herd. This season shall be restricted to gun
10 or bow and arrow hunting only. The Department shall publicly
11 announce, via statewide news release, the season dates and
12 shooting hours, the counties and sites open to hunting.

13 The Department is authorized to establish a separate
14 harvest period at specific sites within the State for the
15 purpose of harvesting surplus deer that cannot be taken during
16 the regular season provided for the taking of deer. This
17 season shall be restricted to gun or bow and arrow hunting only
18 and shall be established during the period of September 1st to
19 February 15th, both inclusive. The Department shall publicly
20 announce, via statewide news release, the season dates and
21 shooting hours, and the counties and sites open to hunting.
22 The Department shall publish suitable prescribed rules and
23 regulations established by administrative rule pertaining to
24 management restrictions applicable to this special harvest
25 program. The Department shall allow unused gun deer permits
26 that are left over from a regular season for the taking of deer

1 to be rolled over and used during any separate harvest period
2 held within 6 months of the season for which those tags were
3 issued at no additional cost to the permit holder subject to
4 the management restrictions applicable to the special harvest
5 program.

6 Beginning July 1, 2019, and on an annual basis thereafter,
7 the Department shall provide a report to the General Assembly
8 providing information regarding deer management programs
9 established by the Code or by administrative rule that
10 includes: (1) the number of surplus deer taken during each
11 separate harvest season; (2) the number of deer found to have a
12 communicable disease or other abnormality; and (3) what
13 happens to the deer taken during each separate harvest season.

14 (Source: P.A. 101-66, eff. 7-12-19; 102-314, eff. 1-1-22;
15 102-932, eff. 1-1-23.)

16 (520 ILCS 5/2.33)

17 Sec. 2.33. Prohibitions.

18 (a) It is unlawful to carry or possess any gun in any State
19 refuge unless otherwise permitted by administrative rule.

20 (b) It is unlawful to use or possess any snare or
21 snare-like device, deadfall, net, or pit trap to take any
22 species, except that snares not powered by springs or other
23 mechanical devices may be used to trap fur-bearing mammals, in
24 water sets only, if at least one-half of the snare noose is
25 located underwater at all times.

1 (c) It is unlawful for any person at any time to take a
2 wild mammal protected by this Act from its den by means of any
3 mechanical device, spade, or digging device or to use smoke or
4 other gases to dislodge or remove such mammal except as
5 provided in Section 2.37.

6 (d) It is unlawful to use a ferret or any other small
7 mammal which is used in the same or similar manner for which
8 ferrets are used for the purpose of frightening or driving any
9 mammals from their dens or hiding places.

10 (e) (Blank).

11 (f) It is unlawful to use spears, gigs, hooks, or any like
12 device to take any species protected by this Act.

13 (g) It is unlawful to use poisons, chemicals, or
14 explosives for the purpose of taking any species protected by
15 this Act.

16 (h) It is unlawful to hunt adjacent to or near any peat,
17 grass, brush, or other inflammable substance when it is
18 burning.

19 (i) It is unlawful to take, pursue or intentionally harass
20 or disturb in any manner any wild birds or mammals by use or
21 aid of any vehicle, conveyance, or unmanned aircraft as
22 defined by the Illinois Aeronautics Act, except as permitted
23 by the Code of Federal Regulations for the taking of
24 waterfowl; except that nothing in this subsection shall
25 prohibit the use of unmanned aircraft in the inspection of a
26 public utility facility, tower, or structure or a mobile

1 service facility, tower, or structure by a public utility, as
2 defined in Section 3-105 of the Public Utilities Act, or a
3 provider of mobile services as defined in Section 153 of Title
4 47 of the United States Code. It is also unlawful to use the
5 lights of any vehicle or conveyance, any light connected to
6 any vehicle or conveyance, or any other lighting device or
7 mechanism from inside or on a vehicle or conveyance in any area
8 where wildlife may be found except in accordance with Section
9 2.37 of this Act; however, nothing in this Section shall
10 prohibit the normal use of headlamps for the purpose of
11 driving upon a roadway. For purposes of this Section, any
12 other lighting device or mechanism shall include, but not be
13 limited to, any device that uses infrared or other light not
14 visible to the naked eye, electronic image intensification,
15 active illumination, thermal imaging, or night vision. Striped
16 skunk, opossum, red fox, gray fox, raccoon, bobcat, and coyote
17 may be taken during the open season by use of a small light
18 which is worn on the body or hand-held by a person on foot and
19 not in any vehicle.

20 (j) It is unlawful to use any shotgun larger than 10 gauge
21 while taking or attempting to take any of the species
22 protected by this Act.

23 (k) It is unlawful to use or possess in the field any
24 shotgun shell loaded with a shot size larger than lead BB or
25 steel T (.20 diameter) when taking or attempting to take any
26 species of wild game mammals (excluding white-tailed deer),

1 wild game birds, migratory waterfowl or migratory game birds
2 protected by this Act, except white-tailed deer as provided
3 for in Section 2.26 and other species as provided for by
4 subsection (l) or administrative rule.

5 (l) It is unlawful to take any species of wild game, except
6 white-tailed deer and fur-bearing mammals, with a shotgun
7 loaded with slugs unless otherwise provided for by
8 administrative rule.

9 (m) It is unlawful to use any shotgun capable of holding
10 more than 3 shells in the magazine or chamber combined, except
11 on game breeding and hunting preserve areas licensed under
12 Section 3.27 and except as permitted by the Code of Federal
13 Regulations for the taking of waterfowl. If the shotgun is
14 capable of holding more than 3 shells, it shall, while being
15 used on an area other than a game breeding and shooting
16 preserve area licensed pursuant to Section 3.27, be fitted
17 with a one-piece plug that is irremovable without dismantling
18 the shotgun or otherwise altered to render it incapable of
19 holding more than 3 shells in the magazine and chamber,
20 combined.

21 (n) It is unlawful for any person, except persons who
22 possess a permit to hunt from a vehicle as provided in this
23 Section and persons otherwise permitted by law, to have or
24 carry any gun in or on any vehicle, conveyance, or aircraft,
25 unless such gun is unloaded and enclosed in a case, except that
26 at field trials authorized by Section 2.34 of this Act,

1 unloaded guns or guns loaded with blank cartridges only may be
2 carried on horseback while not contained in a case, or to have
3 or carry any bow or arrow device in or on any vehicle unless
4 such bow or arrow device is unstrung or enclosed in a case, or
5 otherwise made inoperable unless in accordance with the
6 Firearm Concealed Carry Act.

7 (o) (Blank).

8 (p) It is unlawful to take game birds, migratory game
9 birds or migratory waterfowl with a rifle, pistol, revolver,
10 or air rifle.

11 (q) It is unlawful to fire a rifle, pistol, revolver, or
12 air rifle on, over, or into any waters of this State, including
13 frozen waters.

14 (r) It is unlawful to discharge any gun or bow and arrow
15 device along, upon, across, or from any public right-of-way or
16 highway in this State.

17 (s) It is unlawful to use a silencer or other device to
18 muffle or mute the sound of the explosion or report resulting
19 from the firing of any gun.

20 (t) It is unlawful for any person to take or attempt to
21 take any species of wildlife or parts thereof, or allow a dog
22 to hunt, within or upon the land of another, or upon waters
23 flowing over or standing on the land of another, or to
24 knowingly shoot a gun or bow and arrow device at any wildlife
25 physically on or flying over the property of another without
26 first obtaining permission from the owner or the owner's

1 designee. For the purposes of this Section, the owner's
2 designee means anyone who the owner designates in a written
3 authorization and the authorization must contain (i) the legal
4 or common description of property for which such authority is
5 given, (ii) the extent that the owner's designee is authorized
6 to make decisions regarding who is allowed to take or attempt
7 to take any species of wildlife or parts thereof, and (iii) the
8 owner's notarized signature. Before enforcing this Section,
9 the law enforcement officer must have received notice from the
10 owner or the owner's designee of a violation of this Section.
11 Statements made to the law enforcement officer regarding this
12 notice shall not be rendered inadmissible by the hearsay rule
13 when offered for the purpose of showing the required notice.

14 (u) It is unlawful for any person to discharge any firearm
15 for the purpose of taking any of the species protected by this
16 Act, or hunt with gun or dog, or allow a dog to hunt, within
17 300 yards of an inhabited dwelling without first obtaining
18 permission from the owner or tenant, except that while
19 trapping, hunting with bow and arrow, hunting with dog and
20 shotgun using shot shells only, or hunting with shotgun using
21 shot shells only, or providing outfitting services under a
22 waterfowl outfitter permit, or on licensed game breeding and
23 hunting preserve areas, as defined in Section 3.27, on
24 federally owned and managed lands and on Department owned,
25 managed, leased, or controlled lands, a 100 yard restriction
26 shall apply.

1 (v) It is unlawful for any person to remove fur-bearing
2 mammals from, or to move or disturb in any manner, the traps
3 owned by another person without written authorization of the
4 owner to do so.

5 (w) It is unlawful for any owner of a dog to allow his or
6 her dog to pursue, harass, or kill deer, except that nothing in
7 this Section shall prohibit the tracking of wounded deer with
8 a dog in accordance with the provisions of Section 2.26 of this
9 Code.

10 (x) It is unlawful for any person to wantonly or
11 carelessly injure or destroy, in any manner whatsoever, any
12 real or personal property on the land of another while engaged
13 in hunting or trapping thereon.

14 (y) It is unlawful to hunt wild game protected by this Act
15 between one-half hour after sunset and one-half hour before
16 sunrise, except that hunting hours between one-half hour after
17 sunset and one-half hour before sunrise may be established by
18 administrative rule for fur-bearing mammals.

19 (z) It is unlawful to take any game bird (excluding wild
20 turkeys and crippled pheasants not capable of normal flight
21 and otherwise irretrievable) protected by this Act when not
22 flying. Nothing in this Section shall prohibit a person from
23 carrying an uncased, unloaded shotgun in a boat, while in
24 pursuit of a crippled migratory waterfowl that is incapable of
25 normal flight, for the purpose of attempting to reduce the
26 migratory waterfowl to possession, provided that the attempt

1 is made immediately upon downing the migratory waterfowl and
2 is done within 400 yards of the blind from which the migratory
3 waterfowl was downed. This exception shall apply only to
4 migratory game birds that are not capable of normal flight.
5 Migratory waterfowl that are crippled may be taken only with a
6 shotgun as regulated by subsection (j) of this Section using
7 shotgun shells as regulated in subsection (k) of this Section.

8 (aa) It is unlawful to use or possess any device that may
9 be used for tree climbing or cutting while hunting fur-bearing
10 mammals, excluding coyotes. However, coyotes may not be hunted
11 utilizing these devices during open season for deer except by
12 properly licensed deer hunters.

13 (bb) It is unlawful for any person, except licensed game
14 breeders, pursuant to Section 2.29 to import, carry into, or
15 possess alive in this State any species of wildlife taken
16 outside of this State, without obtaining permission to do so
17 from the Director.

18 (cc) It is unlawful for any person to have in his or her
19 possession any freshly killed species protected by this Act
20 during the season closed for taking.

21 (dd) It is unlawful to take any species protected by this
22 Act and retain it alive except as provided by administrative
23 rule.

24 (ee) It is unlawful to possess any rifle while in the field
25 during gun deer season except as provided in Sections 2.25 and
26 2.26 and administrative rules.

1 (ff) It is unlawful for any person to take any species
2 protected by this Act, except migratory waterfowl, during the
3 gun deer hunting season in those counties open to gun deer
4 hunting, unless he or she wears, when in the field, a cap and
5 upper outer garment of a solid blaze orange color or solid
6 blaze pink color, with such articles of clothing displaying a
7 minimum of 400 square inches of blaze orange or solid blaze
8 pink color material.

9 (gg) It is unlawful during the upland game season for any
10 person to take upland game with a firearm unless he or she
11 wears, while in the field, a cap of solid blaze orange color or
12 solid blaze pink color. For purposes of this Act, upland game
13 is defined as Bobwhite Quail, Hungarian Partridge, Ring-necked
14 Pheasant, Eastern Cottontail, and Swamp Rabbit.

15 (hh) It shall be unlawful to kill or cripple any species
16 protected by this Act for which there is a bag limit without
17 making a reasonable effort to retrieve such species and
18 include such in the bag limit. It shall be unlawful for any
19 person having control over harvested game mammals, game birds,
20 or migratory game birds for which there is a bag limit to
21 wantonly waste or destroy the usable meat of the game, except
22 this shall not apply to wildlife taken under Sections 2.37 or
23 3.22 of this Code. For purposes of this subsection, "usable
24 meat" means the breast meat of a game bird or migratory game
25 bird and the hind ham and front shoulders of a game mammal. It
26 shall be unlawful for any person to place, leave, dump, or

1 abandon a wildlife carcass or parts of it along or upon a
2 public right-of-way or highway or on public or private
3 property, including a waterway or stream, without the
4 permission of the owner or tenant. It shall not be unlawful to
5 discard game meat that is determined to be unfit for human
6 consumption.

7 (ii) This Section shall apply only to those species
8 protected by this Act taken within the State. Any species or
9 any parts thereof, legally taken in and transported from other
10 states or countries, may be possessed within the State, except
11 as provided in this Section and Sections 2.35, 2.36, and 3.21.

12 (jj) (Blank).

13 (kk) Nothing contained in this Section shall prohibit the
14 Director from issuing permits to paraplegics or to other
15 persons with disabilities who meet the requirements set forth
16 in administrative rule to shoot or hunt from a vehicle as
17 provided by that rule, provided that such is otherwise in
18 accord with this Act.

19 (ll) Nothing contained in this Act shall prohibit the
20 taking of aquatic life protected by the Fish and Aquatic Life
21 Code or birds and mammals protected by this Act, except deer
22 and fur-bearing mammals, from a boat not camouflaged or
23 disguised to alter its identity or to further provide a place
24 of concealment and not propelled by sail or mechanical power.
25 However, only shotguns not larger than 10 gauge nor smaller
26 than .410 bore loaded with not more than 3 shells of a shot

1 size no larger than lead BB or steel T (.20 diameter) may be
2 used to take species protected by this Act.

3 (mm) Nothing contained in this Act shall prohibit the use
4 of a shotgun, not larger than 10 gauge nor smaller than a 20
5 gauge, with a rifled barrel.

6 (nn) It shall be unlawful to possess any species of
7 wildlife or wildlife parts taken unlawfully in Illinois, any
8 other state, or any other country, whether or not the wildlife
9 or wildlife parts are indigenous to Illinois. For the purposes
10 of this subsection, the statute of limitations for unlawful
11 possession of wildlife or wildlife parts shall not cease until
12 2 years after the possession has permanently ended.

13 (oo) It is unlawful while deer hunting to possess or be in
14 close proximity to a rifle that is not a wildlife rifle.÷

15 ~~(1) to possess or be in close proximity to a rifle that~~
16 ~~is not centerfire; or~~

17 ~~(2) to be in possession of or in close proximity to a~~
18 ~~magazine that is capable of making a rifle not a single~~
19 ~~shot.~~

20 (Source: P.A. 102-237, eff. 1-1-22; 102-837, eff. 5-13-22;
21 102-932, eff. 1-1-23; 103-154, eff. 6-30-23.)

22 (520 ILCS 5/1.2bb rep.)

23 Section 10. The Wildlife Code is amended by repealing
24 Section 1.2bb.