



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB4504

Introduced 1/26/2026, by Rep. Wayne A. Rosenthal

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

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. In provisions regarding deer hunting, limits legal handguns and rifles to centerfire revolvers, centerfire handguns capable of holding not more than 3 rounds in the magazine and chamber combined, and centerfire rifles capable of holding not more than 3 rounds in the magazine and chamber combined. Provides that, if a centerfire handgun or centerfire rifle is capable of holding more than 3 rounds, it must be fitted with a one-piece plug that is irremovable without dismantling the handgun or rifle, or it must be otherwise altered to render it incapable of holding more than 3 rounds in the magazine and chamber combined. Requires the Department of Natural Resources to adopt rules. In provisions regarding prohibitions, provides that it is unlawful while deer hunting to be in possession of or in close proximity to a magazine that is capable of holding more than 2 rounds (rather than capable of making a rifle not single shot) or to possess a handgun or rifle otherwise capable of holding more than 3 rounds in the magazine and chamber combined. Repeals the definition of "single shot".

LRB104 18460 BDA 31902 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 2.25 and 2.33 as follows:

6 (520 ILCS 5/2.25) (from Ch. 61, par. 2.25)

7 Sec. 2.25. It shall be unlawful for any person to take deer  
8 except (i) with a shotgun, handgun, ~~single shot~~ centerfire  
9 rifle, or muzzleloading rifle or (ii) as provided by  
10 administrative rule, with a bow and arrow, during the open  
11 season of not more than 14 days which will be set annually by  
12 the Director between the dates of November 1st and December  
13 31st, both inclusive, or a special 3-day, youth-only season  
14 between the dates of September 1 and October 31. For the  
15 purposes of this Section, legal handguns and rifles are  
16 limited to: (i) centerfire revolvers; (ii) centerfire handguns  
17 capable of holding not more than 3 rounds in the magazine and  
18 chamber combined; and (iii) centerfire rifles capable of  
19 holding not more than 3 rounds in the magazine and chamber  
20 combined. If a centerfire handgun or centerfire rifle is  
21 capable of holding more than 3 rounds, then, for it to be a  
22 legal handgun or rifle under this Section, it must be fitted  
23 with a one-piece plug that is irremovable without dismantling

1 the handgun or rifle, or it must be otherwise altered to render  
2 it incapable of holding more than 3 rounds in the magazine and  
3 chamber combined ~~centerfire handguns that are either a single~~  
4 ~~shot or revolver and centerfire rifles that are single shot.~~

5 The only legal ammunition for a centerfire handgun or rifle is  
6 a bottleneck centerfire cartridge of .30 caliber or larger  
7 with a case length not exceeding one and two-fifths inches, or  
8 a straight-walled centerfire cartridge of .30 caliber or  
9 larger, both of which must be available as a factory load with  
10 the published ballistic tables of the manufacturer showing a  
11 capability of at least 500 foot pounds of energy at the muzzle.  
12 The barrel of a handgun shall be at least 4 inches. Full metal  
13 jacket bullets may not be used to harvest deer.

14 The Department shall adopt ~~make administrative~~ rules  
15 concerning management restrictions applicable to the firearm  
16 and bow and arrow season. Additionally, the Department shall  
17 adopt rules implementing and administering the changes made to  
18 the Wildlife Code by this amendatory Act of the 104th General  
19 Assembly.

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 If the Department is using its sharpshooting program to  
7 manage chronic wasting disease in a deer herd that is found in  
8 a county in the State and if no cases of that disease have been  
9 identified in that herd in the preceding 3 calendar years,  
10 then the Department shall end the use of that program to manage  
11 chronic wasting disease in that county. However, the program  
12 may be reinstated within the county if chronic wasting  
13 disease is again identified in that herd.

14 Beginning July 1, 2019, and on an annual basis thereafter,  
15 the Department shall provide a report to the General Assembly  
16 providing information regarding deer management programs  
17 established by the Code or by administrative rule that  
18 includes: (1) the number of surplus deer taken during each  
19 separate harvest season; (2) the number of deer found to have a  
20 communicable disease or other abnormality; and (3) what  
21 happens to the deer taken during each separate harvest season.  
22 (Source: P.A. 104-58, eff. 1-1-26.)

23 (520 ILCS 5/2.33)

24 Sec. 2.33. Prohibitions.

25 (a) It is unlawful to carry or possess any gun in any State

1 refuge unless otherwise permitted by administrative rule.

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

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

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

17 (e) (Blank).

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

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

23 (h) It is unlawful to hunt adjacent to or near any peat,  
24 grass, brush, or other inflammable substance when it is  
25 burning.

26 (i) It is unlawful to take, pursue or intentionally harass

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

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

4           (k) It is unlawful to use or possess in the field any  
5 shotgun shell loaded with a shot size larger than lead BB or  
6 steel T (.20 diameter) when taking or attempting to take any  
7 species of wild game mammals (excluding white-tailed deer),  
8 wild game birds, migratory waterfowl or migratory game birds  
9 protected by this Act, except white-tailed deer as provided  
10 for in Section 2.26 and other species as provided for by  
11 subsection (l) or administrative rule.

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

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

1 combined.

2 (n) It is unlawful for any person, except persons who  
3 possess a permit to hunt from a vehicle as provided in this  
4 Section and persons otherwise permitted by law, to have or  
5 carry any gun in or on any vehicle, conveyance, or aircraft,  
6 unless such gun is unloaded and enclosed in a case, except that  
7 at field trials authorized by Section 2.34 of this Act,  
8 unloaded guns or guns loaded with blank cartridges only may be  
9 carried on horseback while not contained in a case, or to have  
10 or carry any bow or arrow device in or on any vehicle unless  
11 such bow or arrow device is unstrung or enclosed in a case, or  
12 otherwise made inoperable unless in accordance with the  
13 Firearm Concealed Carry Act.

14 (o) (Blank).

15 (p) It is unlawful to take game birds, migratory game  
16 birds or migratory waterfowl with a rifle, pistol, revolver,  
17 or air rifle.

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

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

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

1           (t) It is unlawful for any person to take or attempt to  
2 take any species of wildlife or parts thereof, or allow a dog  
3 to hunt, within or upon the land of another, or upon waters  
4 flowing over or standing on the land of another, or to  
5 knowingly shoot a gun or bow and arrow device at any wildlife  
6 physically on or flying over the property of another without  
7 first obtaining permission from the owner or the owner's  
8 designee. For the purposes of this Section, the owner's  
9 designee means anyone who the owner designates in a written  
10 authorization and the authorization must contain (i) the legal  
11 or common description of property for which such authority is  
12 given, (ii) the extent that the owner's designee is authorized  
13 to make decisions regarding who is allowed to take or attempt  
14 to take any species of wildlife or parts thereof, and (iii) the  
15 owner's notarized signature. Before enforcing this Section,  
16 the law enforcement officer must have received notice from the  
17 owner or the owner's designee of a violation of this Section.  
18 Statements made to the law enforcement officer regarding this  
19 notice shall not be rendered inadmissible by the hearsay rule  
20 when offered for the purpose of showing the required notice.

21           (u) It is unlawful for any person to discharge any firearm  
22 for the purpose of taking any of the species protected by this  
23 Act, or hunt with gun or dog, or allow a dog to hunt, within  
24 300 yards of an inhabited dwelling without first obtaining  
25 permission from the owner or tenant, except that while  
26 trapping, hunting with bow and arrow, hunting with dog and

1 shotgun using shot shells only, or hunting with shotgun using  
2 shot shells only, or providing outfitting services under a  
3 waterfowl outfitter permit, or on licensed game breeding and  
4 hunting preserve areas, as defined in Section 3.27, on  
5 federally owned and managed lands and on Department owned,  
6 managed, leased, or controlled lands, a 100 yard restriction  
7 shall apply.

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

12 (w) It is unlawful for any owner of a dog to allow his or  
13 her dog to pursue, harass, or kill deer, except that nothing in  
14 this Section shall prohibit the tracking of wounded deer with  
15 a dog in accordance with the provisions of Section 2.26 of this  
16 Code.

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

21 (y) It is unlawful to hunt wild game protected by this Act  
22 between one-half hour after sunset and one-half hour before  
23 sunrise, except that hunting hours between one-half hour after  
24 sunset and one-half hour before sunrise may be established by  
25 administrative rule for fur-bearing mammals.

26 (z) It is unlawful to take any game bird (excluding wild

1 turkeys and crippled pheasants not capable of normal flight  
2 and otherwise irretrievable) protected by this Act when not  
3 flying. Nothing in this Section shall prohibit a person from  
4 carrying an uncased, unloaded shotgun in a boat, while in  
5 pursuit of a crippled migratory waterfowl that is incapable of  
6 normal flight, for the purpose of attempting to reduce the  
7 migratory waterfowl to possession, provided that the attempt  
8 is made immediately upon downing the migratory waterfowl and  
9 is done within 400 yards of the blind from which the migratory  
10 waterfowl was downed. This exception shall apply only to  
11 migratory game birds that are not capable of normal flight.  
12 Migratory waterfowl that are crippled may be taken only with a  
13 shotgun as regulated by subsection (j) of this Section using  
14 shotgun shells as regulated in subsection (k) of this Section.

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

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

25 (cc) It is unlawful for any person to have in his or her  
26 possession any freshly killed species protected by this Act

1 during the season closed for taking.

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

5 (ee) It is unlawful to possess any rifle while in the field  
6 during gun deer season except as provided in Sections 2.25 and  
7 2.26 and administrative rules.

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

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

22 (hh) It shall be unlawful to kill or cripple any species  
23 protected by this Act for which there is a bag limit without  
24 making a reasonable effort to retrieve such species and  
25 include such in the bag limit. It shall be unlawful for any  
26 person having control over harvested game mammals, game birds,

1 or migratory game birds for which there is a bag limit to  
2 wantonly waste or destroy the usable meat of the game, except  
3 this shall not apply to wildlife taken under Sections 2.37 or  
4 3.22 of this Code. For purposes of this subsection, "usable  
5 meat" means the breast meat of a game bird or migratory game  
6 bird and the hind ham and front shoulders of a game mammal. It  
7 shall be unlawful for any person to place, leave, dump, or  
8 abandon a wildlife carcass or parts of it along or upon a  
9 public right-of-way or highway or on public or private  
10 property, including a waterway or stream, without the  
11 permission of the owner or tenant. It shall not be unlawful to  
12 discard game meat that is determined to be unfit for human  
13 consumption.

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

19 (jj) (Blank).

20 (kk) Nothing contained in this Section shall prohibit the  
21 Director from issuing permits to paraplegics or to other  
22 persons with disabilities who meet the requirements set forth  
23 in administrative rule to shoot or hunt from a vehicle as  
24 provided by that rule, provided that such is otherwise in  
25 accord with this Act.

26 (ll) Nothing contained in this Act shall prohibit the

1 taking of aquatic life protected by the Fish and Aquatic Life  
2 Code or birds and mammals protected by this Act, except deer  
3 and fur-bearing mammals, from a boat not camouflaged or  
4 disguised to alter its identity or to further provide a place  
5 of concealment and not propelled by sail or mechanical power.  
6 However, only shotguns not larger than 10 gauge nor smaller  
7 than .410 bore loaded with not more than 3 shells of a shot  
8 size no larger than lead BB or steel T (.20 diameter) may be  
9 used to take species protected by this Act.

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

13 (nn) It shall be unlawful to possess any species of  
14 wildlife or wildlife parts taken unlawfully in Illinois, any  
15 other state, or any other country, whether or not the wildlife  
16 or wildlife parts are indigenous to Illinois. For the purposes  
17 of this subsection, the statute of limitations for unlawful  
18 possession of wildlife or wildlife parts shall not cease until  
19 2 years after the possession has permanently ended.

20 (oo) It is unlawful while deer hunting:

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

23 (2) to be in possession of or in close proximity to a  
24 magazine that is capable of holding more than 2 rounds; or  
25 ~~making a rifle not a single shot.~~

26 (3) to possess a handgun or rifle otherwise capable of

1           holding more than 3 rounds in the magazine and chamber  
2           combined.

3           (Source: P.A. 102-237, eff. 1-1-22; 102-837, eff. 5-13-22;  
4           102-932, eff. 1-1-23; 103-154, eff. 6-30-23.)

5           (520 ILCS 5/1.2bb rep.)

6           Section 10. The Wildlife Code is amended by repealing  
7           Section 1.2bb.