



# Revisions to Reptile & Amphibian Regulations

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Since 2000, when the reptile and amphibian regulations were first adopted, the technology for marking animals has evolved and there continues to be increasing public interest to acquire amphibians and reptiles as pets and for commercial markets. In addition, the Division of Wildlife has even more data reflecting the distribution and abundance of Ohio's amphibians and reptiles.

**Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 1501:31-13-05 Turtle and Frog Regulations, and OAC 1501:31-25-04 Reptiles and Amphibians Regulations** that address collecting, possession and propagation of native frogs, toads, salamanders, snakes, lizards, and turtles will be combined into one rule for clarification and ease of understanding. The proposed revisions outlined below **will be effective January 1, 2011**.

## **Definitions:**

"Collectable Reptile" and "Collectable Amphibian" have been defined to clearly identify which species may be legally possessed.

## **Bag & Size Limits for Harvesting Bullfrogs, Green Frogs, Snapping or Softshell Turtles:**

- Increase the bullfrog and green frog daily bag limit. The rule is for take under a fishing license for consumption.
- Only snapping and softshell turtles with a minimum carapace length of 13 inches may be harvested.
- Collecting reptiles or amphibians, except for bullfrogs, green frogs, snapping and softshell turtles is not allowed on any lands owned, controlled, administered or under agreement with the Division of Wildlife.
- All reptile and amphibian traps must be marked with a durable waterproof tag bearing the users name and address in the English language, and traps must be checked at least once every 24 hours.

## **Season Dates for Harvesting Snapping or Softshell Turtles:**

Extend the closed season for harvesting snapping and softshell turtles from the wild by two weeks, to May 1 through the last day of June annually. This will help protect turtles during the peak breeding season.

## **Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) Tags for Snakes and Turtles:**

- Allow the use of any brand of unique Passive Integrated Transponder with a frequency of 125kHz, 134.2kHz, or 400kHz.
- All snakes and turtles must be implanted with a unique Passive Integrated Transponder prior to sale, barter, trade or gift. However, snapping or softshell turtles held solely for consumption will not need to be PIT tagged.

## **Record Keeping:**

- In addition to current record keeping requirements, require the date of any and all deaths or escapes.
- Keep all the bill of sales, invoices or receipts of animals sold for five years.
- Require the total weight by species of softshell or snapping turtles that are sold solely for food be recorded, instead of the number of individuals.
- Eliminate the record keeping requirement for retail stores and restaurants who sell bullfrogs, green frogs, snapping turtles and softshell turtles to persons solely for their own consumption.
- Persons who purchase snapping turtles, softshell turtles, bullfrogs or green frogs for their own consumption will not be required to keep records.

## **Permit Not Needed to Keep Ornamental Items:**

No permit will be required to possess items defined as "wildlife ornamental products."

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A statewide hearing was held March 4th at the Division of Wildlife's District One Office and multiple open houses were held March 6th across Ohio so the public had an opportunity to read and discuss proposed regulations with wildlife officials. After considering public input, the Ohio Wildlife Council voted on the proposed rule during its April 7th meeting. View the rule making process and status of the rule can be viewed at <http://www.registerofohio.state.oh.us/>