

DEFINITIONS

Reptile: turtles, lizards and snakes, or any part thereof, and eggs or offspring.

Amphibian: salamanders, frogs and toads, or any part thereof, and eggs or offspring.

Possession Limit: reptiles and amphibians taken alive or dead from the wild, in which are in any way under the control of an individual (including in a vehicle, home, or other storage place).

PENALTIES

Any person convicted of a violation of this rule is subject to the penalties provided for in the W. Va. Code §20-7-9.

Citizens may report violations to any DNR district office or call (844) 484-7367.

Spiny softshell turtle (Apalone s. spinifera)



Jim Justice, Governor
State of West Virginia

Brett McMillion, Director
Division of Natural Resources

Paul Johansen, Chief
Wildlife Resources

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Tennis F. Cook – Public at Large



West Virginia Division of Natural Resources
324 Fourth Ave. • South Charleston, WV 25303

For questions regarding species,
call **(304) 637-0245**.

For questions regarding license requirements, call
(304) 558-2758 or email dnr.wildlife@wv.gov.

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Cover photo: Green frog (Lithobates clamitans)

It is the policy of the Division of Natural Resources to provide its facilities, services and programs to all persons without regard to sex, race, age, religion, national origin or ancestry, disability or other protected group status. 5M 05/2023

WEST VIRGINIA REPTILE AND AMPHIBIAN REGULATIONS



WEST VIRGINIA

DNR

WVdnr.gov

almost heaven



Adrianne Brand

Northern dusky salamander, (*Desmognathus fuscus*)

Reptiles and amphibians are a valuable and abundant wildlife resource. They provide us with opportunities to study, appreciate and use our natural heritage. The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources established these regulations (W.Va. C.S.R. § 58-73-1, et seq.) to enable these activities without harming reptile and amphibian populations.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

- The take or possession of any native West Virginia reptile or amphibian species not listed hereafter is prohibited pursuant to W. Va. Code §20-2-4.
- A valid West Virginia fishing license is required to take American bullfrog and green frog.
- No person may take or possess snake eggs, lizard eggs, skink eggs, turtle eggs, amphibian eggs, tadpoles, or larvae of any species.
- No person may take or possess reptiles or amphibians for education or scientific purposes without obtaining a scientific collecting permit pursuant to W. Va. Code §20-2-50.

Snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*)



COLLECTION, TAKE, AND RELEASE OF AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES

Individuals MAY NOT:

- release any reptile or amphibian back into the wild that was held in captivity for more than 30 days. Reptiles or amphibians that have been held in the same enclosure with other species of reptiles or amphibians may not be released at any time. Reptiles or amphibians that are released must be released at the location of the capture.
- collect reptiles and amphibians from the wild for commercial purposes.
- take or possess any reptile or amphibian from public lands, except when:
 - persons have received written permission from the Chief of the Wildlife Resources Section, provided they carry and exhibit said permission upon request.
 - persons lawfully taking bullfrogs, green frogs, snapping turtles and eastern spiny softshell turtles (wildlife management areas only).

Individuals MAY:

- collect and possess shed snake skins of any species.
- destroy or collect for relocation any snake found in their home or outbuildings, as well as in gardens and fields used for agricultural crops or livestock.

How to Tell a Lizard from a Salamander

Salamanders have an elongated body, a long tail, and a body shape that resembles lizards, and for this reason they are occasionally referred to as “spring lizards.” Salamanders, frogs and toads are amphibians while lizards, turtles and snakes are reptiles. As amphibians, salamanders lack the reptilian characteristics of lizards, such as body scales and claws on their toes. Because of their delicate, moist, scaleless bodies, salamanders are restricted to aquatic or semi-aquatic habitats such as rivers, creeks and springs, and to moist forested areas.



Turtles

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Snapping turtle	<i>Chelydra serpentina</i>
Spiny softshell	<i>Apalone s. spinifera</i>
Turtles may be taken by gigging, snagging or snaring from Jan. 1 through May 15 and from July 15 through Dec. 31. The daily creel limit for snapping turtles and spiny softshells is 10, with a possession limit of 20.	

Salamanders

A person may take the following salamanders year-round for use as fishing bait.

Possession Limit: 10 in aggregate
Season: Open

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Northern dusky salamander	<i>Desmognathus fuscus</i>
Seal salamander	<i>Desmognathus monticola</i>
Allegheny dusky salamander	<i>Desmognathus ochrophaeus</i>
Black Mountain salamander	<i>Desmognathus welteri</i>
Northern spring salamander	<i>Gyrinophilus p. porphyriticus</i>
Kentucky spring salamander	<i>Gyrinophilus p. duryi</i>
Northern two-lined salamander	<i>Eurycea bislineata</i>
Southern two-lined salamander	<i>Eurycea cirrigera</i>
Eastern long-tailed salamander	<i>Eurycea l. longicauda</i>

Licensed bait dealers may possess 250 salamanders in total aggregate from species listed in table.

A person may have in his or her possession no more than 50 salamanders which are purchased from a licensed dealer and accompanied by a bill of sale pursuant to W. Va. Code of State Rules, Title 58 Series 62, Bait Fish Rule.

Frogs and Toads

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
American bullfrog	<i>Lithobates catesbeianus</i>
Green frog	<i>Lithobates clamitans</i>
Frog season opens at 9 p.m. on the Saturday nearest to June 15 and closes at midnight on July 31. The daily creel limit for American bullfrog and green frog is 10, with a possession limit of 20.	