



## **FACT SHEET: CAPTIVE WILDLIFE AND PET STORES MARCH 2021**

Commercial pet stores that sell wildlife may require permits from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission depending on what species of animals they are involved in selling. Please consult the Commission Code of Regulations for further information.

### **What does AGFC consider wildlife?**

The Commission has defined wildlife to include all wild birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians, other wild aquatic forms, and all other wild animals, regardless of classification, whether resident, migratory or imported, protected or unprotected, dead or alive, and shall extend to and include any and every part of any individual species of wildlife, including animals living in a captive state. This does apply to "exotic" animals that are not native to the state. (Code 01.00-C)

### **Commission Permits that May be Required by Pet Stores**

**Wildlife Breeder/Dealer Permit (\$75)** – This is needed by those wishing to sell certain species of terrestrial wildlife including mammals, amphibians, birds, and reptiles (except aquatic turtles). Please see Code Addendum R1.02 for a list of species for which a permit is necessary to breed/sell. Species for which a permit is not necessary to breed or sell are in Code Addendum R1.01. Species which can't be bred or sold at all are listed in Code Addendum R1.03. (Code 9.07)

**Wildlife Importation Permit (\$50)** – This is needed by those wishing to bring certain terrestrial wildlife including mammals, birds, and reptiles (except aquatic turtles) into Arkansas. Please see Code Addendum R1.02 for a list of species for which this permit is required. There are restrictions on importation of other species of wildlife listed in Code Addendum R1.03. Species for which an Importation Permit is not needed are listed in Code Addendum R1.01. (Codes 9.10 and 9.11)

**Venomous Reptile Possession Permit (\$75)** – After July 1, 2021 this is needed to possess any reptile listed in Code 01.00C as a medically significant venomous reptile species, in addition to any other required permits. This is not required to keep native venomous reptiles as personal pets, but is required of those selling them commercially. (Code 19.17)

**Aquatic Turtle Dealer Permit (\$250)** – This is needed by those selling aquatic turtles captured in the wild (either in Arkansas or elsewhere). A Commercial Fishing license and sport fishing license are also needed in conjunction with this permit. (Code 34.01)

**Retail Bait Dealer License (\$10)** – This is needed by those wishing to sell live fish except marine and tropical aquatic wildlife commonly distributed in the aquarium trade and that may be sold without special permit, as long as they are held only in closed aquarium systems and are not otherwise prohibited. (Code 32.02, Section 35.00). Refer to Code 35.12 regarding fish health requirements and Code 35.13 regarding importation of live caught fish. Refer to Code 26.12 regarding stocking in private waters and for the Approved Species List. If selling any fish for pond stocking, a fish dealer license will be required (Code 26.12).

### **Species that may be sold or imported without a permit from the Commission**

There are many species of wildlife that do not require any permits for breeding, selling or importing. See Code Addendum R1.01 for covered species. Marine and tropical aquatic wildlife (except salamanders) commonly distributed in the aquarium trade may be sold without special permit, as long as they are held only in closed aquarium systems and not otherwise prohibited. (Codes 9.01, 32.02, R1.01, R1.03)

### **Other Applicable Regulations**

It is unlawful to import, transport, or possess any species commonly known as snakehead, walking catfish, stickleback, Mexican banded tetra, piranha or rusty crayfish. Northern Snakehead may be possessed once the head has been severed from the body. (Code 26.13)

Alligators and other crocodilians may not be possessed as pets. (Code 12.01)

It is unlawful to knowingly transport zebra mussels within Arkansas. (Code 26.14)

It is unlawful to buy, sell, possess for sale, or offer for sale any game fish. (Code 26.20)

It is unlawful to import alligator snapping turtles, razorback musk turtles, or chicken turtles into Arkansas. (Code 34.11)

Fish and wildlife caught from the wild for possession as personal pets may not be sold. (Codes 9.14 and 26.26)

It is unlawful to release wildlife into the wild without prior written approval from the Commission. To protect the health and safety of the public and the wildlife resources, the Commission and its designees are authorized to recapture or dispatch any wildlife, whether kept legally or illegally, that escapes from or is illegally released from captivity. (Code 9.03)

The US Department of Agriculture and the Arkansas Livestock and Poultry Commission also have regulations relating to the importation and sale of certain species of wildlife.