

CHAPTER 202
HB 655-FN - FINAL VERSION

13Mar2025... 0063h
04/17/2025 1586s

2025 SESSION

25-0347
09/08

HOUSE BILL ***655-FN***

AN ACT relative to fish and game violations, permits, and licenses.

SPONSORS: Rep. Spillane, Rock. 2; Rep. Cole, Hills. 26; Rep. Darby, Hills. 11; Rep. Edwards, Rock. 31; Rep. Khan, Rock. 30; Rep. Love, Rock. 13; Rep. Popovici-Muller, Rock. 17; Rep. Ouellet, Coos 3; Sen. Gannon, Dist 23; Sen. Sullivan, Dist 18; Sen. Watters, Dist 4

COMMITTEE: Fish and Game and Marine Resources

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill:

I. Increases the restitution for the illegal taking or possession of certain animals, and makes such restitution mandatory.

II. Allows for an increased hunting license suspension for a third violation of a fish and game law or regulation.

III. Establishes a class A misdemeanor penalty for a third-offense violation of fish and game offenses that carry a license suspension penalty.

IV. Removes the requirement that a crossbow permit issued for certain persons with a disability be perpetual.

V. Adds Atlantic menhaden to the list of species that nonresidents may not take unless the state in which such person is a resident provides a reciprocal licensing privilege for residents of this state.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
 Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struckthrough.~~]
 Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five

AN ACT relative to fish and game violations, permits, and licenses.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 202:1 Fish and Game; Restitution for Illegal Taking or Possessing. Amend RSA 207:55 to read as
2 follows:

3 207:55 Restitution for Illegal Taking or Possessing.

4 I. In addition to the penalties provided for violating any of the provisions of RSA title LXII or title
5 XVIII or any rule made under the authority thereof, any person convicted of the illegal taking or illegal
6 possession of game animals, game birds, or fur-bearing animals, resulting in the injury, death, or
7 destruction of the same, [may] **shall** be sentenced to make restitution to the state for the value of each
8 game animal, game bird, or fur-bearing animal so taken or possessed as follows:

9 (a) Marten, moose and bear: \$1,000 per animal illegally taken or illegally possessed.

10 (b) Deer: [~~\$250~~] **\$1,000** per animal illegally taken or illegally possessed.

11 (c) Wild rabbit, hare, muskrat and gray squirrel: [~~\$10~~] **\$50** per animal illegally taken or
12 illegally possessed.

13 (d) Wild turkey: [~~\$200~~] **\$500** per bird illegally taken or illegally possessed.

14 (e) Ruffed grouse, spruce grouse, pheasant, woodcock, ducks or geese: [~~\$15~~] **\$50** per bird
15 illegally taken or illegally possessed.

16 (f) Fisher, bobcat, otter, **and fox**: [~~\$200~~] **\$500** per animal illegally taken or illegally
17 possessed.

18 (g) [~~Fox: \$75 per animal illegally taken or illegally possessed.~~

19 (h) Beaver, [and] mink, **and raccoon**: [~~\$20~~] **\$250** per animal illegally taken or illegally
20 possessed.

21 [(i) ~~Raccoon: \$20 per animal illegally taken or illegally possessed.~~]

22 II. In every case of conviction involving the illegal taking or illegal possession of game animals,
23 game birds, or fur-bearing animals, the court [may] **shall** order the defendant to reimburse the state in a
24 sum or sums not to exceed the amount as established in paragraph I. Such reimbursements shall be paid
25 directly to the court. If 2 or more defendants are convicted of the illegal taking or the illegal possession of
26 the game animal, game bird or fur-bearing animal the reimbursement above prescribed shall be declared
27 against them jointly and severally.

28 III. Courts ordering such reimbursement damages shall remit such monies as prescribed in RSA
29 206:34. Monies collected from such reimbursement damages shall be deposited in the fish and game
30 fund.

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1 IV. Any person failing to make a [damage-assessment] *restitution* payment as ordered by the
2 court shall be guilty of contempt and such person shall not be eligible to purchase any license issued by
3 the fish and game department until all assessments are paid in full.

4 202:2 New Paragraph; Fish and Game; Revocation or Suspension for Conviction. Amend RSA
5 214:19 by inserting after paragraph II the following new paragraph:

6 II-a. The executive director shall revoke or suspend the license of any person who has been
7 found guilty in any court a third time within 7 years of the first finding of guilty of a violation of any such law
8 or regulation, for a period of not less than one year nor more than 7 years from the date of such finding or
9 conviction.

10 202:3 New Paragraph; Fish and Game; Penalties. Amend RSA 214:37 by inserting after paragraph
11 IV the following new paragraph:

12 V. Any person who has been found guilty, in any court, of 3 separate violations of any law under
13 Title XVIII that carries a license suspension penalty, within 7 years of the first finding of guilty of any such
14 violation, shall be deemed a habitual offender and shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

15 202:4 Crossbows Permitted for Certain Persons with a Disability. Amend RSA 207:10-c, II to read as
16 follows:

17 II. ~~[The crossbow permit shall be perpetual.]~~ The executive director shall retain the records for
18 such permits for a period not less than 7 years. Loss or destruction of the permit after 7 years shall
19 obligate the permittee to re-establish eligibility.

20 202:5 Nonresident Commercial Salt Water License. Amend RSA 211:49-a, I to read as follows:

21 I. Any person who does not qualify as a resident under RSA 207:1, who takes, possesses, lands,
22 or transports by any method, from or on the waters of this state, regardless of where the catch was taken,
23 any marine species by any method for the purpose of selling the same, shall first procure a valid license
24 from the executive director to do so. This license shall not include the taking, possession, landing, or
25 transport of northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*) which requires a license under RSA 211:49-e, or the
26 taking of lobsters and crabs, which requires a license under RSA 211:18. A nonresident shall not take
27 sea urchins, clam worms, river herring, *Atlantic menhaden*, or scallops unless the state in which such
28 person is a resident provides a reciprocal licensing privilege for residents of this state.

29 202:6 Effective Date.

30 I. Sections 1, 3, and 5 of this act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

31 II. The remainder of this act shall take effect upon its passage

Approved: July 15, 2025

Effective Date:

I. Sections 1, 3, & 5 effective September 13, 2025

II. Remainder effective July 15, 2025

