

RHODE ISLAND LAWS

UAPPEAL

GENERALLY

DEM is given authority to:

- Prohibit take, holding or possession of ANY species
- Prohibit, control or regulate commercial use, import and export of ANY species

(R.I. Gen. Laws § 20-1-12)

IMPORT DOMESTIC ANIMALS (Agriculture)

PERMIT (Import Permit) and Certificate of Veterinary Inspection generally required to import domestic animals along with meeting any specific requirements.

LIST: includes

- Alpaca
- Common coturnix (common and Japanese quail)
- Common pigeon (from blue rock pigeon)
- Domestic camel (Dromedary and Bactrian)
- Domestic cat excluding hybrids
- Domestic cattle (domestic cow and zebu)
- Domestic chicken (from red junglefowl)
- Domestic dog excluding hybrids
- Domestic ducks (from mallard; Aylesbury, Blue Swedish, Buff, Cayuga, Crested White, English call, Indian runner, Pekin, and Roen ducks from Muscovy duck)
- Domestic equines (horses and donkeys) including hybrids with domestics
- Domestic geese (from graylag goose; Emden, Gray African, Pilgrim, Sebastopol, Toulouse from swan goose; African goose and Chinese goose from Egyptian goose)
- Domestic goat
- Domestic guineafowl (from helmet guineafowl)
- Domestic hamster (from golden hamster and Asiatic dwarf hamsters (Phodopus))
- Domestic rabbit including European rabbit breeds, varieties, strains – excludes European rabbit and San Juan rabbit
- Domestic sheep
- Domestic swine except wild/feral (those not pets, commercial agriculture, biomedical research)
- Domestic Turkey from wild turkeys including APA and USDA breeds (excludes wild turkey, captive ones, pen-raised/game-farm non-standard turkey)
- Domestic water buffalo
- Domestic yak

- Guinea pig
- Laboratory mouse including house mouse breeds, varieties, and strains
- Laboratory rat including Norway rat breeds, varieties and strains
- Llama
- Mongolian gerbil
- Peafowl (from blue peafowl)
- Ratites

(250-RICR-40-05-1)

IMPORT AND POSSESSION OF WILD ANIMALS (Agriculture)

BANS import and possession of carnivores with no USDA rabies vaccine and nonhuman primates.

- PERMIT issued for researchers, short-term USDA exhibitors, AZA

BANS import and possession of native wildlife.

- PERMIT issued for department, USFWS, AZA, research institutions and researchers doing research or project, and short-term USDA licensed exhibitors

BANS import and possession of red-eared sliders and exotic amphibians.

- PERMIT for import by researcher or pet shop and their transportation carriers **and possession for indoor pets**
- Pet shops must notify buyers of need to keep indoors and prevent escape AND keep a register of purchasers for 3 years including signed statement of compliance by buyers

BANS import and possession of mute swans, mudpuppies (Necturus) and bullfrogs.

- EXEMPT: flesh of bullfrogs for consumption

BANS import and possession of feral and wild swine.

- PERMIT for commercial breeding, meat production, pets, biomedical research – BANS release

PERMIT required for possession and importation of other native and exotic animals.

- GRANDFATHERED: already owned animals by USDA exhibitor with possession permit
- EXEMPT:
 - USDA and AZA zoos (must meet other requirements)
 - Nuisance Wildlife Control Specialists (possession)

- Wildlife Rehabilitator (possess native)
 - Division of Agriculture, Division of Fish and Wildlife, or Division of Law Enforcement
 - RI SPCA (possession)
 - Insects (possession native/exotic)
 - EXCLUDES: nuisance, invasive, state or federal prohibited import species
 - Exempt animals
 - Domestic animals
 - Game bird propagation (possess native)
 - Falconry License (possess native)
 - Transport through state if not exhibited or sold or transferred or kept overnight without approval
- BANS breeding without permission

PERMIT TYPES:

- Native Wild Animal Possession/Importation Permit (native species) – Fish and Wildlife
- Exotic Wild Animal Possession Permit (exotic species) – Agriculture
- Resale Permit (pet shops for exotics) – instead of exotic possession

LISTS:

- Native reptiles and amphibians – See Reptiles and Amphibians
- Native Mammals:
 - American Beaver
 - American Mink
 - Big Brown Bat
 - Black Bear
 - Bobcat
 - Common Muskrat
 - Eastern Chipmunk
 - Eastern Cottontail
 - Eastern Coyote
 - Eastern Gray Squirrel
 - Eastern Mole
 - Eastern Red Bat
 - Fisher
 - Gray Fox
 - Hairy-tailed Mole
 - Hoary Bat
 - Little Brown Bat
 - Long-tailed Weasel

- Masked Shrew
- Meadow Jumping Mouse
- Meadow Vole
- Moose
- New England Cottontail
- Northern Long-eared Bat
- Northern short-tailed Shrew
- Porcupine
- Raccoon
- Red Fox
- Red Squirrel
- River Otter
- Short-tailed Weasel
- Silver-haired Bat
- Small-footed Bat
- Smoky Shrew
- Snowshoe Hare
- Southern Bog Lemming
- Southern Flying Squirrel
- Southern Red-backed Vole
- Star-nosed Mole
- Striped Skunk
- Tri-colored Bat
- Virginia Opossum
- Water Shrew
- White-footed Mouse
- White-tailed Deer
- Woodchuck
- Woodland Jumping Mouse
- Woodland Vole
- Mountain Lion
- Wolf

EXOTIC SPECIES EXEMPT

- Insects
 - USDA prohibited insects
 - BANS import
 - PERMIT for possession
 - Others – EXEMPT from permit
 - EXCLUDES: nuisance, invasive, those banned from import

- Other Invertebrates:

- BANS possession of:
 - Zebra Mussels
 - Spiny Waterflea
 - Fishhook Waterflea
 - All non-indigenous crayfish
 - Asiatic Clam (*Corbicula*) – live
- Others – EXEMPT from permit
 - EXCLUDES: nuisance, invasive, those banned from import

- Fish
 - BANS possession of:
 - Grass Carp
 - Rudd
 - Walking Catfish
 - Snakeheads (*Channidae* and *Parachannidae*)
 - Black Carp
 - Round Goby
 - Tubenose Goby
 - Ruffe
 - Aquarium trade fish – EXEMPT from permit
 - EXCLUDES: Endangered

- Amphibians:
 - BANS import and possession except research, pet shops
 - EXCEPTION: Allows possession as pets if indoors

- Turtles:
 - PERMIT needed for:
 - Argentina or Chaco Tortoise
 - Gopher tortoises and others (*Gopherus*)
 - Pancake Tortoise
 - Unlisted Exotics – EXEMPT from permit
 - EXCLUDES: endangered

- Snakes:
 - EXEMPT from permit except endangered and those requiring permit:
 - boas and pythons (*Boidae*)
 - Shield-tailed Snakes, Sunbeam Snakes (*Uropeltidae* and *Xenopeltidae*)
 - Worm Snakes, Thread Snakes (*Typhlopidae*, *Leptotyphlopidae*, and *Anomalepididae*)
 - Asian Rat Snakes (*Elaphe*, *Ptyas*, *Zaocys*, and *Bogetophis*)
 - Bird Snake or Puffing Snake (*Pseustes*)

- Brown and Redbelly Snakes (Storeria)
- Diadem Snakes (Spalerosophis)
- Glossy Snakes (Arizona)
- Gopher and Pine Snakes (Pituophis)
- Green Snakes (Opheodrys)
- Ground Snakes (Sonora)
- House Snakes (Boaedon/Lamprophis)
- Kingsnakes and Milk Snakes (Lampropeltis) – nonnative
- Mole Snake (Pseudaspis)
- North American Rat Snakes (Pantherophis)
- Texas Indigo Snake
- Tropical Rat Snakes (Spilotes)
- Water Snakes (Nerodia/Natrix)
- Western Hognose Snake
- PERMIT required:
 - Venomous
 - Emerald Tree Boa
 - Green Tree Python (Chondropython)
 - African Rock Python
 - Reticulated Python
 - Anaconda (Eunectes)
 - Allegheny Rat Snake except albinistic and leucistic
 - Unlisted exotics
- Lizards:
 - EXEMPT from permit except endangered and those requiring permit:
 - Skinks (Scincidae)
 - False Club-tailed Lizards (Pseudocordylus)
 - Girdle-tailed Lizards (Cordylus)
 - Plated Lizards (Gerrhosaurus)
 - Rock Lizards (Platysaurus)
 - Girdle-tailed lizards (Zonosaurus)
 - Teiids (Teiidae)
 - Lacertid Lizards (Acanthodactylus, Gallotia, Lacerta, Podarcis, Psammodromus)
 - Alligator Lizards (Gerrhonotus)
 - Glass Lizards (Ophisaurus)
 - Slowworm (Anguis)
 - Gekkos (Gekkonidae)
 - Basilisks (Basiliscus)
 - Collared and Leopard Lizards (Crotaphytus)
 - Common or Green Iguanas
 - False or Spring-tailed Iguanas (Ctenosaurus)
 - (Liolaemus)
 - New World Chameleons (Anolis and Ctenotus)
 - Spiny Lizards (Sceloporus)
 - Tree and Bush Lizards (Urosaurus)
 - (Uranoscodon)

- Zebra-tailed Lizards (*Callisaurus*)
 - Agamid Lizards (*Amphibolurus*, *Calotes*, *Hydrosaurus*, *Pogona*, *Physignathus*)
 - Night Lizards (*Xantusia*)
 - Old World Chameleons (*Chameleonidae*)
- PERMIT required:
 - Gila Monster
 - Beaded Lizard
 - Monitors (*Varanidae*)
 - Florida Sand Skinks (*Neoseps*)
 - Solomon Island Ground Skink (*Tribolonotus*)
 - Brown Water Teiids (*Neusticurus*)
 - Desert Teiids (*Dicrodon*)
 - Earless Teiids (*Bachia*)
 - Rough Teiids (*Echinosaura*)
 - Snake Teiids (*Ophiognomon*)
 - Spectacled Teiids (*Gymnophthalmus*)
 - Worm Teiids (*Scolacosaurus*)
 - Big Bend Gekko
 - Utah Night Lizard
 - Unlisted exotics
- Birds:
 - BANS mute swans
 - EXEMPT from permit:
 - Blue or Button Quail
 - Pigeons and Doves (*Columbidae*)
 - Bobwhite quail
 - Chukar partridge
 - Waxbills and allies (*Estrildidae*)
 - Finches and allies (*Fringillidae*)
 - Pheasants (*Phasianinae*)
 - Weaver Finches (*Ploceidae*)
 - Parrots and their allies (*Psittacidae*)
 - Toucans, Aracaris, and Toucanets (*Ramphastidae*)
 - Starlings and Mynahs (*Sturnidae*)
 - PERMIT required:
 - Endangered species (also need USFWS)
 - Migratory birds (MBTA) (also need USFWS)
 - Red-billed, Black-fronted, and Sudan Diochs
 - Monk Parakeet
 - Rose-colored Starling
 - Unlisted exotics
- Mammals:
 - EXEMPT from permit:

- Four-toed (African pygmy) Hedgehog
- Chinchilla from captive stock
- Degu
- Egyptian Spiny Mouse
- House Mouse
- Jerboas (Dipus)
- Norway Rat
- Paca (Cuniculus)
- Captive bred hamsters – common pets
- Sugar Glider
- Ferret – Ferret Permit from Fish & Wildlife required
- PERMIT required:
 - Cervids (except AZA)
 - Unlisted exotics

(R.I. Gen. Laws §20; 250-RICR-40-05-3)

CERVIDS (Fish & Wildlife)

BANS release of cervids.

- EXEMPT: rehabilitators and research

PERMIT and Certificate of Veterinary Inspection required to import, transport or possess cervids.

- EXEMPT:
 - AZA zoos and aquariums, research facilities, or other animal care facilities
 - wildlife rehabilitator license
 - Division of Agriculture, Division of Fish and Wildlife, or Division of Law Enforcement
 - RI SPCA

(250-RICR-60-00-2)

MUTE SWANS AND WILD TURKEY (Fish & Wildlife)

BANS rehabilitation of mute swans.

BANS import, export, possession, liberation, sale, and barter of mute swans and wild turkeys and eggs.

- PERMIT issued for mute swans for certain purposes
- Also see general wild animal law

(250-RICR-60-00-9.17)

PSITTACINE BIRDS (Agriculture)

PERMIT (Import Permit) and health certificate required to import psittacine birds.

REQUIREMENTS:

Import, purchase, breeding, sale, exchange, barter, give away, dealing:

- records of each bird
- closed metal seamless band or microchip
- initial and annual written notification of breeding to local health officer and DEM (breeders)
- humanely euthanize or treat all birds if psittacosis found as allowed
- notify local health officer and DEM of unusual deaths or illnesses

(R.I. Gen. Laws § 4-11)

NON-PSITTACINE BIRDS EXPOSED TO PSITTACOSIS (Agriculture)

Non-psittacine birds exposed to psittacosis must be quarantined 3 weeks and either and killed and burned by owner if symptoms develop.

(R.I. Gen. Laws § 4-11-9)

FERRETS (Fish & Wildlife)

BANS using European ferrets to hunt game along with release.

PERMIT (Ferret Permit) issued to import, transport and possess ferrets.

- Must apply within 2 weeks for personal possession or before possession for distribution purposes
- Permit application and rabies certificate must accompany all sales
- Distributors also need pet distributor license by Division of Agriculture and log
- must be vaccinated against rabies by 3 months, certified of spay or neuter, and kept on leash, harness or in cage if outdoors

(R.I. Gen. Laws § 20-16-3; 250-RICR-40-05-2, 250-RICR-60-00-6)

WILD BIRDS AND GAME

BANS killing, take, destruction and possession of wild birds.

- EXEMPT:
 - as allowed by law
 - English or European house sparrows or European starlings

PERMIT (Commercial Game Propagation License) required to propagate or sell wild birds, game quadrupeds, or domestic game.

- Non-Commercial (keep in enclosure)
- Commercial (commercial raising and selling)
- Slaughtered Game Birds (sell game birds)

(R.I. Gen. Laws §20-2-29, 20-14-1, 20-14-3, 20-17-1, 20-17-2)

FURBEARERS

BANS sale of cottontail rabbit, varying hare, and gray squirrels.

Possession of furbearers requires they be legally taken or imported.

- EXEMPT: live raccoons bred or kept under permit

(R.I. Gen. Laws §20-16-5, 20-16-18)

TURTLE SALES (Agriculture)

Turtles sold must be free from Salmonellosis.

(R.I. Gen. Laws §4-4-27)

SNAPPING TURTLES, BULLFROGS, GREEN FROGS (Fish & Wildlife)

BANS commercial take of snapping turtles.

BANS live take of bullfrogs, green frogs and snapping turtles.

PERMIT (Fishing, Hunting or Trapping License) only allows immediate killing

CLOSED SEASON:

- Snapping turtles – May 15 to Jul 15
- Frogs – Jun 1 to Jul 31

LEGAL METHODS:

- Snapping turtles – turtle traps, hand, hand-held dip nets, snagging, or bow and arrow
- Frogs - hand, hand-held dip nets, spearing, hook and line, or bow and arrow

LIMITS:

- Snapping turtles – 6/season – must have at least 13” carapace
- Bullfrogs/green frogs – 20/day combined

(250-RICR-60-00-9.15)

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS (Fish & Wildlife)

BANS release of exotic species.

BANS possession, take and possession of other native reptiles and amphibians.

- SPECIAL PERMIT issued for certain purposes

LIST:

- Amphibians:
 - American toad
 - eastern red-backed salamander
 - eastern spadefoot
 - four-toed salamander
 - Fowler’s toad
 - gray treefrog
 - marbled salamander
 - northern dusky salamander
 - northern leopard frog
 - spring salamander
 - northern two-lined salamander
 - pickerel frog
 - eastern newt
 - spotted salamander
 - spring peeper
 - wood frog

- Reptiles:
 - eastern box turtle
 - eastern musk turtle
 - painted turtle
 - diamond-backed terrapin
 - spotted turtle
 - wood turtle
 - eastern ribbonsnake

- northern watersnake
- common gartersnake
- eastern hog-nosed snake
- milksnake
- eastern ratsnake
- common wormsnake
- North American racer
- Dekay's brownsnake
- red-bellied snake
- ring-necked snake
- smooth greensnake
- timber rattlesnake

(250-RICR-60-00-9.15)

ENDANGERED SPECIES

BANS buying, selling, storage, transport, import, export, and trafficking US and state endangered species.

- PERMIT issued for research or educational display by a legitimate college or university

(R.I. Gen. Laws §20-37)

AQUATIC SPECIES (Fish & Wildlife)

These permits are issued for aquatic species:

- Commercial Aquaculture Permit (take, possess, sell, import and transport aquatic organisms used in aquaculture)
- Stocking License (stock streams and private ponds)
- Commercial Minnow License (sell or barter freshwater minnows for bait OR possess >100)

(R.I. Gen. Laws § 20-10, 20-11-4, 20-11-6, 20-11-7)

OTHER PERMITS (Fish & Wildlife)

- Special Scientific Collector's permit for Wildlife Rehabilitation (rehabilitate wildlife)
 - EXEMPT:
 - transport of birds, reptiles, amphibians, and non-rabies vector species mammals directly to rehabilitator or within 24 hours if not possible
 - veterinarians providing emergency treatment – must transfer to rehabilitator in 48 hours if stable
 - rehabilitating house mouse, Norway rat; house sparrow, rock pigeon, and European starling
 - EXCLUDES: marine mammals and exotic wild animals unless authorized
 - ALLOWS: rehabilitate, handle, possess, transport, or release along with import and export if division notified, display non-releasable for education with federal and/or native wild animal import/possession permit
 - BANS: ownership, sale, purchase, taming, neuter, exhibition and propagation and veterinary medicine without license
 - Must notify division within 48 hours of receiving federally threatened or endangered species, beaver, black bear, bobcat, coyote, fisher, river otter, porcupine, and white-tailed deer
- Wildlife Control Specialist Permit (provide wildlife control on another property)
 - LIMITED TO: striped skunk, opossum, raccoon, red and gray fox, coyote, bats, moles, muskrat, gray, red and flying squirrels, chipmunk, woodchuck, rats, mice, voles, cottontail rabbits, weasels, mink, pigeons, starlings, English sparrows, monk parakeet, snapping turtle, and snakes
 - EXCLUDES: endangered species
 - BANS: keeping, taming, propagation, sale, trade, barter
- Scientific Collector's Permit (take, handle and possess for study or management of wildlife populations, carrying out scientific experiments, and cultivation projects)
 - Type 1 Research and Education (research and education programs not for profit)
 - Type 2 Governmental (state/federal agency for scientific studies or research)
 - Type 3 Consulting (private consulting for profit)
 - Type 4 Municipal Deer Management (municipality to take nuisance deer)
 - Endangered species require permission
- Falconry License
- Shooting Preserve License (domestic game birds)
- Field Trial License (conduct event where domestic game taken)

EXOTIC INVASIVE FRESHWATER FISH AND INVERTEBRATES

BANS release of non-native fish and invertebrates.

(R.I. Gen. Law § 20-1-27)

EXOTIC BAITFISH

BANS import, transport, culture and sale of exotic baitfish.

Allows Department to create list of approved native baitfish and a list of prohibited exotic species.

(R.I. Gen. Law § 20-1-28)

ANIMAL CARE (Agriculture)

Dogs and cats along with rabbits, rodents, nonhuman primates, birds, other warm-blooded vertebrates, amphibians, fish, and reptiles are regulated under the Animal Care laws.

- EXCLUDES: horses, cattle, sheep, goats, swine, and domestic fowl

(R.I. Gen. Law § 4-19; 250-RICR-40-05-4)

ELEPHANT HANDLING (Agriculture)

BANS the use of a bullhook, ankus, baseball bat, axe handle, pitchfork, or similar device to train or control elephants used in traveling show or to allow an employee, agent or contractor to do same.

(R.I. Gen. Law § 4-1-43 – Added 2017)

RELEASE OF ANIMALS

BANS willful release of animals in park, circus, zoo or similar facility – misdemeanor.

(R.I. Gen. Laws § 4-1-29)

IMPORT (DEM)

PERMIT (Import permit) required to import primates, carnivores, amphibians, reptiles, canines, and insects. Director can add or remove species or groups.

- EXEMPT:
 - AZA facilities (must provide quarterly summary of acquisitions/dispositions)
 - nonresident exhibitions up to 30 days
 - BANS sale, trade or gift in state
 - Import directly to AZA and USDA facility for zoological purposes (other requirements must be met)

ISSUED FOR:

- Breeding for recognized animal colony for experimental breeding of captive animals

PERMIT (special permit) issued to import pets with completed written affidavit or declaration under penalty of perjury.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Quarantine period after import
 - Primates - physical exam and TB test upon entry that is repeated 30 days later and can only be released by department if 1) TB tests are negative, 2) no visible oral ulcers, 3) no dysentery or diarrhea, emesis, emaciation, contagious skin lesions, central nervous system disturbances, jaundice, or abnormal respiratory signs, and 4) healthy
 - Carnivores – 90 days – must confine in place and manner approved (may be approved primary enclosure) and only released by department if found healthy
 - Institutions/zoo/lab/college/university – may satisfy by contract with them – must meet requirements
- May grant variances

(R.I. Gen. Laws 4-18; 20-17-9)