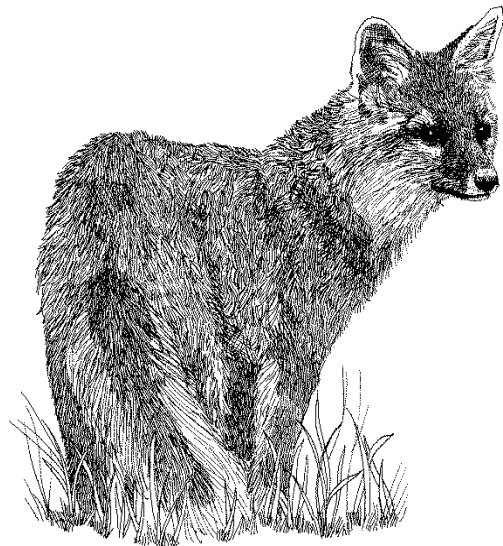


# MAINE TAXIDERMY INFORMATION BOOKLET



**(This Booklet is only an information summary and is not law as printed)**



**Inland Fisheries and Wildlife**

**353 Water Street**

**State House Station #41**

**Augusta, ME 04333**

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## **TAXIDERMY INFORMATION**

Taxidermy means the art of preparing, stuffing and/or mounting the skins of fish or wildlife, or parts thereof, so as to make them appear lifelike. Any person practicing the art of taxidermy for commercial purposes must hold a taxidermist license.

### **The holder of a taxidermist license may:**

- 1) possess, at the licensee's place of business, lawfully acquired fish or wildlife specimens for the sole purpose of preparing and mounting them, including skull mounts;
- 2) transport lawfully acquired and properly tagged fish and wildlife specimens to and from the licensee's place of business;
- 3) sell lawfully acquired specimens of fish and wildlife that have been preserved through the art of taxidermy if that sale does not violate regulations of the United States Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act or other federal regulations;
- 4) designate others to aid or assist in conducting business at the licensee's place of business and;
- 5) buy, sell, or barter untanned hides or head of wild animal.

### **Qualifications for obtaining a taxidermist license:**

- 1) able to demonstrate trustworthiness and competence to practice the art of taxidermy in such a manner as to safeguard the interests of the public;
- 2) not a habitual violator (person whose records, as maintained by the department, shows that the person has been convicted of 3 or more of the prohibited acts contained in chapters 901 to 931 within the previous 5-year period);
- 3) has not been convicted of violating the conditions or authorizations of any state or federal fish and wildlife taxidermy permit;
- 4) has satisfied the reporting requirements for any previous taxidermy license; and
- 5) able to complete all application and examination requirements.

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## Licensing process for new applicants:

- 1) Complete the Taxidermy application and return it to the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Department with the nonrefundable application fee of \$125.00. Failure or refusal to provide information requested on the application is sufficient grounds for rejection of the application.
- 2) Applicants must satisfactorily complete a written examination in each license classification for which they apply. A passing score on the written examination must be 70% or higher. Unsuccessful applicants must wait a minimum of 14 days before retaking the written exam for that classification. There are no written exams for Skull, Bone, Antler Classification, Reptile and Amphibian Classification or the Freeze-Dried Classification.
- 3) Upon successful completion of the written exam(s), the applicant will have an oral board examination for each classification and must have a passing score of 70% or higher. Applicants that do not pass the oral examination for that classification, must wait a minimum of 30 days before reapplying for that portion of the examination. The fee allows unsuccessful applicants to retake the written or oral examination once without paying an additional fee.

## The classifications for taxidermy licensing:

- 1) Birds
- 2) Fish
- 3) Mammals and Heads
- 4) General (all of the above)
- 5) Reptile and Amphibian
- 6) Skull Mount, Bone and Antler
- 7) Freeze-Dried

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## Oral taxidermy interview criteria:

At the oral taxidermy interview, the applicant must present for inspection by the board, the species named below, mounted by the applicant within the last 3 years:

Bird applicant: one native bird mount with feet and legs visible unless waived by the Department. i.e. non-native mounts.

Fish applicant: one native fish skin mount.

Mammals and Heads applicant: one native antlered whitetail deer head mount and one native (full-size) small mammal no bigger than a fox mounted.

General applicant: all of the above.

Reptile and Amphibian applicant: one native reptile or amphibian.

Skull mounts: one skull.

Freeze-Dried applicant: any two native specimens from the following list: a small mammal, bird, fish, reptile or amphibian.

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## The criteria used to judge each specimen will be:

- 1) **LIFELIKE AND REALISTIC IN APPEARANCE:** This will include proportion; muscle structure; setting of the eyes and antlers; proper placement of ears, wings, feet, and legs; workmanship around lips and nose; and durability of work.
- 2) **SEWING:** Seams must not show and must be completely closed. Patching of skin must be of the same color and texture.
- 3) **EARS:** Paper or plastic liners or other media should be used in whitetail deer ears. All ears must be tight with no drumming or bridging.
- 4) **RESTORATION OF COLOR:** Any color used must give a natural appearance. Over-painting and over-waxing are not acceptable.
- 5) **PRESERVATION:** Any part subject to deterioration must be adequately preserved. All specimens (especially fish) will be checked for objectionable odors.
- 6) **CLEANLINESS OF SPECIMEN:** Evidence of grease, oils, paint, dirt, borax, sawdust, etc., on specimen is not acceptable. Skull mounts should be clean, free of tissue, free of odor, and should be whitened and sealed. Skull mounts should be 95% white.
- 7) **SUPPORT STRENGTH:** Wires or rods used for support in legs, necks, wings, etc., must be of sufficient strength for their intended use.

The applicant should bring his or her best work to be judged. Excuses of not doing quality work because the applicant could not secure proper specimens will not be accepted. To pass the examination, all mounts submitted must be acceptable and satisfactory. No novelties are acceptable. All specimens must be found in the wild in Maine unless this requirement is waived by the Department.

**NEW TAXIDERMIST FEE:** After successful completion of all application, application fee, and testing requirements, a taxidermy license will be issued upon payment of a \$77 fee.

**LICENSE PERIOD:** Licenses issued pursuant to this section run for a period of 3-years, from the current year of issuance until the 31st day of December in the 3rd year after issuance, on which date the license expires unless it is revoked sooner.

**RENEWAL FEE:** A taxidermy license can be renewed every 3-years by completing an application and paying the \$77 license fee. If a taxidermy license that has lapsed for a 3-year period, the applicant must apply as a new taxidermy applicant and will need to take the written and oral examination(s). The application fee for a new applicant is \$125.00.

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**REEXAMINATION:** The Commissioner may require any taxidermist to be reexamined if the Commissioner receives a written complaint and upon investigation, finds that the taxidermist no longer meets the qualifications to be licensed as a taxidermist in Maine.

**INVESTIGATION AND GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION OF LICENSE:** The Commissioner shall investigate all complaints made to the Department and all cases of noncompliance with, or violation of, the taxidermy laws of Maine. Any person may register a complaint of fraud, deceit, gross negligence, incompetency or misconduct against any licensee or permittee. These complaints must be in writing, be sworn to by the person making them, and filed with the Department.

**DISCIPLINARY ACTION:** The Commissioner may suspend, revoke, refuse to issue, or refuse to renew a license, or the Administrative Court may revoke, suspend, or refuse to renew a license, for any one of the following causes:

- 1) Procuring a license or permit by fraud or deceit practiced upon the Department or a purchaser;
- 2) Failure to meet the competency standards established;
- 3) Engaging in the art of taxidermy under a false name or alias with fraudulent intent;
- 4) Incompetence, negligence, or neglect in the conduct of the practice of the art of taxidermy, including, but not limited to, entering into a contractual agreement with a customer to provide services and then failing, without just cause, to provide the services as agreed;
- 5) Failure to meet the qualifications for a license, including, but not limited to failing to pass a reexamination;
- 6) For any violation of the taxidermy laws or rules; or
- 7) Failure to complete work and return to customer in a timely manner that will be determined by the Department.



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**HEARINGS:** Hearings may be conducted by the Commissioner to assist with investigations, to determine whether grounds exist for suspension, revocation, or denial of a license. The Commissioner shall hold an adjudicatory hearing at the written request of any person who is denied a license or permit without a hearing for any reason other than to pay a required fee, provided that the request for hearing is received by the Commissioner within 30 days of the applicant's receipt of written notice of the denial of the application, the reasons for the denial and the right to request a hearing. Hearings must be conducted in conformity with the Maine Administrative Procedure Act, Title 5, Chapter 375, Subchapter IV, to the extent applicable. The Commissioner may subpoena witnesses, records and documents in any hearing the Commissioner conducts.

**TERMS OF REVOCATION OF LICENSE:** A person whose license has been revoked may not apply for a new license for a minimum of 3 years.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS:** A licensed taxidermist must notify the Department of any changes of address of the licensee or his place of business within ten days.

**RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:** The holder of a taxidermist license must maintain a complete and accurate record of all fish and wildlife, or parts thereof, received and possessed by virtue of the taxidermy license, and work completed in the books supplied by the Department. The records must be open for inspection by any agent of the Commissioner during normal business hours. The license holder shall file a copy of those records within 10 days after the end of the year of which the license is valid. The taxidermist must maintain a copy of the records for a period of four years after the work is completed, which is listed in Title 12, Section 12952 (2-A).

If a taxidermist is buying and selling hides, hide dealer report books must be maintained and available for inspection by any agents of the Commissioner. Hide dealer report books must be submitted to the Department on or before June 30<sup>th</sup> of each year. When completing the report book, if an item is received by mail, write "rec'd by mail" in the signature block. Always fill out the "Client's License Number" box if the pelt was taken by virtue of a license. If not, write in the box how species was obtained. Any out-of-state legal kills should be accompanied by the out-of-state license number.

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**TAGGING REQUIREMENTS:** The species below must be registered and/or tagged before being presented to a taxidermist:

Deer	Otter	Fisher	Bear	Fox	Coyote
Moose	Bobcat	Beaver	Turkey	Marten	Mink

Raw skins of fox, bobcat, marten, fisher, coyote, beaver, mink, otter, and Atlantic salmon imported by licensed taxidermists for the purpose of taxidermy need not be tagged. The taxidermist should always have receipt or proof of purchase of species imported without tags.

**SALVAGE OF ROAD-KILLED ANIMALS:** Properly licensed hunters, trapper, and taxidermists may salvage snowshoe hare, gray squirrel, red squirrel, ruffed grouse (partridge), ring necked pheasant, beaver, raccoon, muskrat, otter, mink, fox, coyote, marten, fisher, bobcat, skunk, opossum, woodchuck, weasel, and porcupine which have been killed by motor vehicles and left along the highways of the State as follows:

- 1) During any open hunting or trapping season on the species listed above, salvaged road-kills must be counted as part of any possession or season limit and must be tagged in accordance with the department rules which apply to wildlife taken by hunting or trapping.
- 2) During times of the year when the season is closed on the species listed in the policy, salvaged road-kills must be presented to an agent of the commissioner within 48 hours. If the agent finds that the requirements of the policy and applicable state laws have been satisfied, the agent will tag the wild bird or wild animal in accordance with the same department rules which apply to wildlife taken by hunting or trapping and issue a certificate of ownership. A certificate of ownership will entitle a person to use or dispose of the salvaged road-kill, or any part thereof, under the same provisions as would apply if the upland game or furbearing animal had been legally taken by hunting or trapping.

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**STATE LIST OF ENDANGERED OR THREATENED SPECIES:** It is illegal to hunt, trap, possess, process, sell, offer to sell, deliver, carry, transport, or ship any Maine endangered or threatened species. The Commissioner may permit exceptions to the prohibited act for educational or scientific purposes or to enhance the propagation or survival of an endangered or threatened species. Species endangered or threatened within Maine as of October 25, 2023, are or visit our website at <https://www.maine.gov/ifw/fish-wildlife/wildlife/endangered-threatened-species/listed-species.html>

## **BIRDS**

American Pipit	Arctic tern	Atlantic Puffin	Bank Swallow
Barrow's Goldeneye	Bicknell's Thrush	Black-crowned Night Heron	Blackpoll Warbler
Black Tern	Cliff Swallow	Common Gallinule	Golden Eagle
Grasshopper Sparrow	Great Cormorant	Harlequin Duck	Least Bittern
Least Tern	Peregrine Falcon	Piping Plover	Razorbill
Roseate Tern	Saltmarsh Sparrow	Sedge Wren	Short-eared Owl
Upland Sandpiper			

## **FISH**

Swamp Darter	Redfin Pickerel
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## **MAMMALS**

Eastern Small-Footed Bat	Little Brown Bat	New England Cottontail	Northern Bog Lemming
Northern Long-eared Bat			

## **REPTILES**

Black Racer	Blanding's Turtle	Spotted Turtle
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**MIGRATORY BIRDS:** To perform taxidermy services on migratory birds, a federal taxidermy permit must be obtained from the US Fish & Wildlife Service by visiting or contact US Fish & Wildlife, Migratory Bird

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Permit Office, Region 5 at 300 Westgate Center Drive in Hadley, MA 01035, [PermitsR5MB@fws.gov](mailto:PermitsR5MB@fws.gov) or (413)-253-8643.

Migratory birds are:

Ducks	Pigeons	Woodcock	Little Brown Cranes
Geese	Snipes	Brant	Rails
Crows	Swans	Coots	Doves

Gallinules

No person may sell a migratory game bird unless it is pen-raised or commercially raised and identified by a leg band and a receipt containing the breeder's license number.

A person may sell the plumage of lawfully taken wild birds if that sale does not violate regulations of the United States Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

**DESTROYING THE NEST OR EGGS OF WILD BIRDS:** A person may not take, possess or destroy the nest or eggs of a wild bird, except the English or European house sparrow, the rock dove and the European starling.

**SALE OF FISH:** A person cannot buy or sell black bass, landlocked salmon, pickerel, togue (lake trout), trout, or white perch in the state, but can sell a fish once it is mounted and preserved. Fish which have been produced by commercial producers within the State or which have been lawfully imported from outside the State may be purchased or sold as long as each fish is properly tagged with the name and address of the original source.

**SEIZURE OF FISH, WILDLIFE, AND EQUIPMENT:** All fish or wildlife found in the possession of any person in violation of Title 12, Chapters 901 to 931, and all equipment, including firearms, possessed or used in violation of chapters 901 and 931, shall be contraband and shall be subject to seizure by any officer authorized to enforce these chapters.

**MARINE SPECIES:** If a person is mounting marine species, information on the possession laws should be obtained from the Department of Maine Resources, 32 Blossom Lane, Augusta, ME 04330, <https://www.maine.gov/dmr/home> or 207-624-6550.

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**SAFETY FOR HANDLING MAMMALS:** There are several diseases that may be carried by mammals in Maine. Some are transmittable to humans, such as tularemia and rabies, while others are not. In most cases, the best habit to promote would be to always wear surgical latex gloves while skinning and handling carcasses and untanned pelts. After handling, thoroughly wash hands with a good disinfectant soap.

Animals that may be suspected of carrying rabies should not be handled and should be disposed of in accordance with the [Maine CDC guidelines](#) or call 1-800-821-5821. It is impossible to tell the difference, in most cases, between animals showing symptoms of rabies versus those with distemper. This is especially true with raccoons. Symptoms may include watery or crusty eyes and nasal membranes and excessive salivation. Again, any mammal suspected of carrying rabies should not be handled.

**GOOD BUSINESS RECOMMENDATION:** Each customer should be given a receipt stating a brief description of the specimen, the cost to complete the job, the amount of the deposit (if any), the date, and the estimated completion date. The receipt should be signed by you and the customer, similar to a contract.

You will need to obtain a sales tax # from Maine Revenue Services, at 207-626-8475.

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## Informational Contacts

### Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Information Center: 207-287-8000

Licensing: 207-287-2571

Complaint on a Taxidermists: 207-287-5290

Maine Taxidermy Application: [www.maine.gov/ifw/forms](http://www.maine.gov/ifw/forms)

Maine Taxidermy Rules: [www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/09/chaps09.htm](http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/09/chaps09.htm)

### Maine Warden Service

Chief Warden (Augusta): 207-287-2766

Gray Headquarters: 207-657-2345

Sidney Headquarters: 207-547-5300

Bangor Headquarters: 207-941-4440

Greenville Headquarters: 207-695-3756

Ashland Headquarters: 207-435-3231

US Fish & Wildlife Service: 413-253-8200

## HISTORICAL NOTE:

The Maine Taxidermy License was established by the Legislature in 1895 to enable people practicing taxidermy to possess fish and game for mounting purposes. The Commissioners issued a 3-year taxidermy license for a \$5 fee to anyone “skilled in that art, of good reputation, and friendly to the fish and game laws of the state”. This appears to be the first license issued by the Commissioners of Inland Fisheries and Game (there were 3 Commissioners at that time). It was recorded that at least \$50,000 was paid out to taxidermists in payment for birds, fish, and game mounted during 1897.