TITLE 17: CONSERVATION  
CHAPTER I: DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
SUBCHAPTER b: FISH AND WILDLIFE  

PART 550  
RACCOON, OPOSSUM, STRIPED SKUNK, RED FOX, GRAY FOX, COYOTE,  
BOBCAT AND WOODCHUCK (GROUNDHOG) HUNTING  

Section  
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AUTHORITY: Implementing and authorized by Sections 1.3, 1.4, 1.10, 2.1, 2.2, 2.30, 2.30b, 2.33 and 3.5 of the Wildlife Code [520 ILCS 5].  

Section 550.10 General Regulations

a) It is unlawful to hunt raccoon, opossum, striped skunk, red fox, gray fox, coyote, bobcat and woodchuck (groundhog) in counties open for deer hunting during the firearm deer hunting season as specified in 17 Ill. Adm. Code 650.10, except coyotes may be taken by persons in possession of a valid unfilled firearms deer permit during hours and seasons specified in 17 Ill. Adm. Code 650.10 using hunting devices authorized by 17 Ill. Adm. Code 650.30. Violation is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.30).

b) Hound running areas licensed pursuant to Section 3.26 of the Wildlife Code [520 ILCS 5/3.26] are exempt from this Part.

(Source: Amended at 41 Ill. Reg. 8542, effective June 28, 2017)

Section 550.20 Statewide Regulations

a) Raccoon, Opossum

1) Hunting dates: November 10 through the next following February 15, except as noted in Section 550.10(a). Hunting outside the set season dates is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.30).

2) Hunting hours: Season begins ½ hour before sunrise on opening date and ends ½ hour after sunset on closing date. Hours for hunting raccoon and opossum with a gun are not restricted during intervening dates of the open season, except as noted in Section 550.10(a). During the archery deer season, hours for hunting raccoon and opossum with a bow and arrow shall coincide with hours for hunting deer with a bow and arrow, as specified in Section 2.26 of the Wildlife Code [520 ILCS 5]. Hunting prior to sunrise on opening day is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.30). Hunting prior to ½ hour before sunrise on opening day or during the archery deer season, or hunting after ½ hour after sunset during the archery deer season, is a Class A misdemeanor with a minimum $500 fine, and a maximum $5,000 fine, in addition to other statutory penalties (see 520 ILCS 5/2.33(y)).

3) Daily limit and possession limit: None.

b) Red fox and gray fox
1) Hunting dates: November 10 through the next following February 15, except as noted in Section 550.10(a). Hunting outside the season dates is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.30).

2) Hunting hours: Season begins ½ hour before sunrise on opening date and ends ½ hour after sunset on closing date. Hours for hunting red fox and gray fox with a gun are not restricted during intervening dates of the open season, except as noted in Section 550.10(a). During the archery deer season, hours for hunting red fox and gray fox with a bow and arrow shall coincide with the hours for hunting deer with a bow and arrow as specified in Section 2.26 of the Wildlife Code. Hunting prior to sunrise on opening day is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.30). Hunting prior to ½ hour before sunrise on opening day or during the archery deer season, or hunting after ½ hour after sunset during the archery deer season, is a Class A misdemeanor with a minimum $500 fine and a maximum $5,000 fine, in addition to other statutory penalties (see 520 ILCS 5/2.33(y)).

3) Daily limit and possession limit: None.

c) Coyote and Striped Skunk

1) Hunting dates: Year around except as noted in Section 550.10(a).

2) Hunting hours: One-half hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset, except from the opening date of the red fox and gray fox hunting season through March 15, when statewide hunting hours are unrestricted, and except during archery deer season when coyote and striped skunk bow hunting hours shall coincide with the statewide archery deer hunting hours, as specified in Section 2.26 of the Wildlife Code. Hunting before ½ hour prior to sunrise or after ½ hour after sunset is a Class A misdemeanor with a minimum $500 fine and a maximum $5,000 fine, in addition to other statutory penalties, except when hours are unrestricted (see 520 ILCS 5/2.33(y)).

3) Daily limit and possession limit: None.

d) Woodchuck (groundhog)

1) Hunting dates: June 1 through the next following March 31, except as noted in Section 550.10(a). Hunting outside the season dates is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.30).

2) Hunting hours: One-half hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset.
Hunting prior to ½ hour before sunrise or after ½ hour after sunset is a Class A misdemeanor with a minimum $500 fine and a maximum $5,000 fine, in addition to other statutory penalties (see 520 ILCS 5/2.33(y)).

3) Daily limit and possession limit: None.

e) Bobcat

1) Closed Zone: Taking bobcats is prohibited inside an area bounded by the Indiana State border from Lake Michigan southward to U.S. Route 36 (New Route 36), westward on U.S. Route 36 to U.S. Route 51, northward on U.S. Route 51 to the Wisconsin State border, and eastward on the Wisconsin State border to Lake Michigan. Bobcats may be taken in the remainder of the State in accordance with this Section.

2) Hunting dates: November 10 through the next following February 15, except as noted in Section 550.10(a)

3) Hunting hours: Season begins ½ hour before sunrise on opening date and ends ½ hour after sunset on closing date. Hours for hunting bobcat with a gun are not restricted during intervening dates of the open season, except as noted in Section 550.10(a). During the archery deer season, hours for hunting bobcat with a bow and arrow shall coincide with hours for hunting deer with a bow and arrow as specified in Section 2.26 of the Wildlife Code. Hunting prior to ½ hour before sunrise or after ½ hour after sunset is a Class A misdemeanor with a minimum $50 fine and a maximum $5,000 fine, in addition to other statutory penalties (see 520 ILCS 5/2.33(y)).

4) Daily limit and possession limit: Not to exceed one bobcat per permittee per season for combined methods of take. Bobcats salvaged from roadways under authority of Section 2.30 of the Wildlife Code become part of the permittee's season limit and are subject to permit and tagging requirements. Possession limit for bobcat does not apply to fur buyers, fur tanners, taxidermists or manufacturers as defined by Sections 3.11, 3.12, 3.15, 3.16, 3.16a, 3.18 and 3.21 of the Wildlife Code.

(Source: Amended at 43 Ill. Reg. 9430, effective August 23, 2019)

Section 550.25 Permit and Tagging Requirements – Bobcat

a) Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Permit
1) Applications from residents and nonresidents will be accepted online only at www.dnr.illinois.gov from September 1 through September 30 of the current year.

2) Each person may apply for one Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Permit per application period.

3) Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Permits will be allocated in a computerized random drawing. Beginning July 1, 2020, applicants who did not receive a permit the previous year will have preference by being part of the initial random drawing. If any additional permits remain to be allocated after that drawing, a second drawing will take place for all of the individuals who received a permit the previous year.

4) The Department will mail Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Permits to successful applicants after the drawing is held.

5) A nonrefundable fee of $5 will be charged for each application for a Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Permit.

6) The number of Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Permits that are made available each season will be determined by the Department in accordance with federal regulations (50 CFR 23.69)(2007).

7) No more than 5% of permits will be allocated to nonresidents.

8) If the number of available permits exceeds the number distributed to applicants during the lottery, remaining permits will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis at www.dnr.illinois.gov for $5 each. Applicants who received a permit in the preceding lottery are ineligible to receive a second permit.

9) Hunters must possess a Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Permit before taking or attempting to take a bobcat.

10) Hunters must possess a Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Permit before salvaging a bobcat from roadways under Section 2.30 of the Wildlife Code.

11) Bobcat Hunting and Trapping permits are not transferable. Violation is a Petty Offense (see 520 ILCS 5/2.30c).

12) Bobcat Hunting and Trapping Permits allow harvest of bobcats in all parts of the State that are not identified as closed in Section 550.20(e)(1).
b) Bobcat Registration Permit

1) Hunters must purchase a Bobcat Registration Permit within 48 hours after taking a bobcat.

2) The cost of a Bobcat Registration Permit is $5.

3) Bobcat Registration Permits will be available for purchase online only at www.dnr.illinois.gov.

4) Bobcat Registration Permits must be purchased by the same individual who took a bobcat and are not transferable. Violation is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.30c).

5) The Department will issue a United States Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (U.S. CITES) pelt tag to individuals who took a bobcat in accordance with this Part and purchased a Bobcat Registration Permit.

c) Tagging Requirement

1) A U.S. CITES pelt tag must be permanently affixed to the green hide of each bobcat and sealed before the green hide is exported from the United States or transferred to a fur buyer, fur tanner, taxidermist or manufacturer. Violation is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.30b).

2) Unless an alternative method has been approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, each green hide of a bobcat that is to be exported or re-exported must have a U.S. CITES tag permanently attached (50 CFR 23.69) (2007).

3) It is unlawful to possess more unsealed U.S. CITES tags issued by the Department than green hides of bobcat in possession. Violation is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.30b).

4) Unsealed U.S. CITES tags are not transferable.

(Source: Amended at 43 Ill. Reg. 9430, effective August 23, 2019)

Section 550.26 Limits on Total Harvest – Bobcat
a) Statewide limits on the total number of bobcats that may be hunted or trapped during a season are set forth in Section 2.30 of the Wildlife Code. Bobcats salvaged from roadways in accordance with that statute do not count toward limits established for hunting and trapping.

b) The Department may close the bobcat season before the closing date set forth in Section 550.20 when it is apparent limits on the total number of bobcats that may be hunted or trapped during a season will be exceeded. Remaining valid permit holders will be contacted by letter and email, if applicable.

c) Bobcat Hunting and Trapping permits will not be valid after the closing date specified in Section 550.20 or after permittees are notified of early closure of the season, whichever is earlier.

(Source: Added at 42 Ill. Reg. 2834, effective January 24, 2018)

Section 550.30 Raccoon, Opossum, Striped Skunk, Red Fox, Gray Fox, Coyote, Bobcat and Woodchuck (Groundhog) Hunting on Department-Owned, -Leased or -Managed Sites

a) All the regulations in 17 Ill. Adm. Code 510 – General Hunting and Trapping apply in this Section, unless this Section is more restrictive.

b) For sites where hunter quotas exist and permits are required a drawing shall be held prior to the opening of the season. The date of the drawing shall be announced by the Department by public announcement and the drawing shall be held at the site. The number of permits per site shall be determined pursuant to 17 Ill. Adm. Code 510.20. Sites that require use of windshield cards by hunters as specified in 17 Ill. Adm. Code 510.10 are followed by (1).

c) .22 caliber or smaller rimfire firearms permitted from sunset to sunrise unless otherwise specified; use of a shotgun with slugs to take furbearing mammals is prohibited except as provided in Section 550.10(a).

d) Coyote and striped skunk season shall coincide with the statewide fox season unless otherwise specified.

e) No woodchuck (groundhog) hunting allowed unless otherwise specified.

f) Statewide regulations as provided for in this rule apply at the following sites (exceptions are in parentheses):

Alvah Borah State Habitat Area (1)

Anderson Lake State Conservation Area (all hunting to begin after the
close of duck season)

Apple River Canyon State Park – Thompson and Salem Units (1)

Argyle Lake State Park (1)

Banner Marsh State Fish and Wildlife Area (coyote only; coyotes can be
taken with archery equipment when the site is open to archery deer
hunting during archery shooting hours; coyotes can be taken with
shotguns on days when the site is open to upland hunting with upland
shooting hours)

Big Bend State Fish and Wildlife Area (coyote season from August 1
through the following February 28)

Big River State Forest (1)

Burning Star State Fish and Wildlife Area (No hunting on Island Lake
waterfowl rest area from November 1 through February 28) (1)

Cache River State Natural Area

Campbell Pond State Wildlife Management Area (1)

Cape Bend State Fish and Wildlife Area

Carlyle Lake Lands and Waters – Corps of Engineers Management Lands

Carlyle Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area (subimpoundment area closed 7
days prior to and during the waterfowl season) (1)

Chauncey Marsh State Natural Area (1)

Clinton Lake State Recreation Area (1)

Coffeen Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area (coyote only; shotgun or bow
and arrow) (1)

Copperhead Hollow State Wildlife Area (1)

Crawford County State Fish and Wildlife Area (1)

Cretaceous Hills State Natural Area (1)
Cypress Pond State Natural Area

Deer Pond State Natural Area

Des Plaines State Fish and Wildlife Area (coyote may be taken with a shotgun from the day after the archery deer season closes until February 28; pursuit of coyotes with dogs is prohibited; archery deer hunters may take coyotes during the archery deer season) (1)

Devil's Island State Fish and Wildlife Area

Dog Island State Wildlife Management Area (1)

Eagle Creek State Park (season opens day after second firearm deer season; closes December 20; hunting sunset to sunrise only; raccoon only) (1)

Eldon Hazlet State Park (north of Allen Branch and west of Peppenhorst Branch)

Embarras River Bottoms State Habitat Area (1)

Ferne Clyffe State Park – Cedar Draper Bluffs Hunting Area

Fort de Chartres State Historic Site (muzzleloading firearms or bow and arrow only)

Fox Ridge State Park (1)

Freeman Mine (1)

Giant City State Park (except for archery or firearm deer hunters, coyote season opens the day after the second firearm deer season and closes March 31; woodchuck hunting season opens the day after the second firearm deer season and closes March 31)

Green River State Wildlife Area (skunk and coyote close the last day of February; .22 rimfire firearms permitted from 30 minutes after sunset until 30 minutes before sunrise) (1)

Hamilton County State Conservation Area (1)

Hanover Bluff State Natural Area (1)
Harry "Babe" Woodyard State Natural Area (1)

Hennepin Canal State Trail (archery only; coyote and raccoon only; season open only when the site archery deer season is open) (1)

Hidden Springs State Forest (1)

Horseshoe Lake State Conservation Area – Alexander County (Public Hunting Area except Controlled Hunting Area)

Horseshoe Lake State Park – Madison County (bow and arrow only; for hunters with a valid site issued archery deer permit only; site opens to statewide regulations during the month of February)

Horseshoe Lake State Park – Madison County – Gabaret, Mosenthein, Chouteau Island Units (1)

Iroquois County State Wildlife Management Area (season opens the day after permit pheasant season) (1)

Jim Edgar Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area (statewide seasons for coyote and striped skunk) (1)

Johnson Sauk Trail State Recreation Area (archery only; coyote and fox only; site coyote season runs concurrently with the site archery deer season; site fox season begins when the statewide fox season opens, runs concurrently with the site archery deer season, and closes the earlier of either the statewide fox season closing or the site archery deer season closing) (1)

Jubilee College State Park (coyote only; season runs concurrently with firearm deer season)

Kankakee River State Park (coyote, fox, skunk and opossum may be taken during their respective seasons that fall within the archery deer season by archery only; shotgun only hunting opens the day after the close of the site upland game season or archery deer season, whichever is later, and closes with the close of the statewide fox season) (1)

Kaskaskia River State Fish and Wildlife Area (Doza Creek Waterfowl Management Area closed 7 days prior to and during duck season; the defined Baldwin Lake Waterfowl Rest Area is closed)

Kickapoo State Recreation Area (1)
Kinkaid Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area

Lincoln Trail State Park (hunting hours sunset to sunrise only; raccoon only) (1)

Marseilles State Fish and Wildlife Area (coyote only; November 5 through the first Thursday after January 10; hunting hours are 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset; use of dogs is prohibited; unauthorized personnel may not be on the site outside of the posted check station operating hours; hunters must enter the site only from designated parking lots)

Marshall State Fish and Wildlife Area (raccoon, opossum open to statewide regulations; skunk, red fox, gray fox, coyote and woodchuck open to archery during the archery deer season and statewide regulations after the close of archery deer season) (1)

Marshall State Fish and Wildlife Area – Duck Ranch Unit (raccoon and opossum only; opens the day after the close of duck season)

Matthiessen State Park (coyote only with a shotgun from the date after the archery deer season closes until February 28; use of dogs is prohibited; archery deer hunters may take coyotes during the archery deer season) (1)

Mautino State Fish and Wildlife Area (archery only; coyote and raccoon only; season open only when the site archery deer season is open) (1)

Mazonia State Fish and Wildlife Area (archery only; coyote, fox, raccoon, skunk and opossum may be taken during their respective seasons that fall within the archery deer hunting season; statewide hours)

Meeker State Habitat Area (1)

Mermet Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area (hunting limited to upland game area; hunting hours ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset) (1)

Middle Fork State Fish and Wildlife Area (1)

Mississippi River State Fish and Waterfowl Management Area (Pools 25 and 26)

Mississippi River Pools 16, 17, 18, 21, 22 and 24 (groundhog hunting allowed)
Momence Wetlands State Natural Area (archery only; coyote, fox, raccoon, skunk and opossum may be taken during their respective seasons that fall within the archery deer hunting season; statewide hours)

Moraine View State Park (coyote open concurrently with site archery deer hunting, archery only; raccoon opens the second Monday in December, night hunting only) (1)

Newton Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area (coyote and bobcat hunting only; coyote and bobcat may be taken during their respective seasons that fall within the archery deer season by archery deer hunters only; coyotes may be taken with a shotgun from the day after the archery season closes until February 28; bobcats may be taken with shotgun from the day after archery season closes until the end of bobcat hunting season; pursuit of coyotes and bobcats with dogs is prohibited) (1)

Oakford State Conservation Area

Peabody River King State Fish and Wildlife Area (except South Subunit; shotgun or bow only; coyote season open from August 1 through the following February 28 and during the spring turkey season to hunters with a valid, unfilled turkey permit; use of dogs for hunting coyotes is prohibited)

Pyramid State Park (1)

Pyramid State Park – Captain Unit (no hunting on waterfowl refuge) (1)

Pyramid State Park – Denmark Unit (no hunting on waterfowl refuge) (1)

Pyramid State Park – East Conant Unit (1)

Pyramid State Park – Galum Unit (1)

Rall Woods State Natural Area (1)

Ramsey Lake State Park (shotgun or bow and arrow only) (1)

Randolph County State Conservation Area

Ray Norbut State Fish and Wildlife Area (1)

Ray Norbut State Fish and Wildlife Area – Dutch Creek Unit (opens day
after second firearm deer season) (1)

Red Hills State Park (coyote and bobcat hunting only; coyote and bobcat may be taken during their respective seasons that fall within the archery deer season by archery deer hunters only; coyotes may be taken with a shotgun from the day after the archery season closes until February 28; bobcats may be taken with shotgun from the day after archery season closes until the end of bobcat hunting season; pursuit of coyotes and bobcats with dogs is prohibited) (1)

Rend Lake Project Lands and Waters

Rivers Project Office – Corps of Engineers Managed Lands (1)

Sahara Woods State Fish and Wildlife Area (1)

Saline County State Fish and Wildlife Area (1)

Sam Dale Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area (1)

Sam Parr State Park (1)

Sand Ridge State Forest (coyote and striped skunk seasons – opening of the statewide raccoon season until the day before opening of the statewide spring turkey season) (1)

Sangamon County State Conservation Area

Sanganois State Fish and Wildlife Area (statewide seasons for coyote and striped skunk) (1)

Sangchris Lake State Park (fox, coyote and striped skunk hunting only; statewide seasons for fox, coyote and striped skunk, except, during central zone duck and Canada goose season, hunters pursuing waterfowl or upland game may take fox, coyote and striped skunk with shotgun only in accordance with site-specific regulations set forth in 17 Ill. Adm. Code 530 and 590) (1)

Shawnee National Forest, Oakwood Bottoms and LaRue Scatters (season closes 7 days before opening of duck season and remains closed through the duck season; at Oakwood Bottoms non-toxic shot only)

Shelbyville State Fish and Wildlife Area (1)
Sielbeck Forest State Natural Area

Siloam Springs State Park (raccoon and bobcat only) (1)

Siloam Springs State Park – Buckhorn Unit (raccoon and bobcat only) (1)

Silver Springs State Fish and Wildlife Area (coyote may be taken with a shotgun from the day after the archery deer season closes until February 28; pursuit of coyotes with dogs is prohibited; archery deer hunters may take coyotes during the archery deer season)

Skinner Farm State Habitat Area

Spoon River State Forest (1)

Stephen A. Forbes State Park (1)

Tapley Woods State Natural Area (1)

Ten Mile Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area (statewide coyote, striped skunk and groundhog hunting allowed; .22 caliber or smaller rimfire firearms permitted 24 hours a day; designated Waterfowl Rest Areas closed during open season for Canada goose) (1)

Trail of Tears State Forest

Turkey Bluffs State Fish and Wildlife Area

Walnut Point State Park (raccoon hunting only) (1)

Washington County State Conservation Area

Weinberg-King State Park (raccoon and bobcat only) (1)

Weinberg-King State Park – Scripps Unit (use of dogs for hunting coyote is not allowed) (1)

Weinberg-King State Park – Spunky Bottoms Unit (1)

Wildcat Hollow State Forest (1)

Winston Tunnel State Natural Area (1)
Wise Ridge State Natural Area

Witkowsky State Wildlife Area (coyote only; season shall coincide with archery and firearm deer season at this site; archery only during the archery deer season at this site) (1)

Wolf Creek State Park (season opens day after second firearm deer season; closes December 20; hunting sunset to sunrise only; raccoon only) (1)

Woodford County State Fish and Wildlife Area (raccoon, opossum only; season opens after duck season) (1)

g) Statewide regulations apply except that hunters must obtain a permit from the site; where hunter quotas exist, permits are allocated as described in subsection (b); permits must be in possession while hunting; the permit must be returned by February 15 or hunter will forfeit hunting privileges at that site the following year (exceptions are in parentheses):

   Beaver Dam State Park (bow and arrow only; for hunters with a valid site issued archery deer permit only)

   Pere Marquette State Park

   Ramsey Lake State Park

h) Violation of a site regulation is a Class B misdemeanor (see 520 ILCS 5/2.30).

(Source: Amended at 43 Ill. Reg. 9430, effective August 23, 2019)