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Animals and Fish - Historical Notes

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We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other CTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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The following is a listing of acts that at one time affected, but no longer appear to have any effect on, hunting, fishing or animal control in Bledsoe County. They are included herein for reference purposes. Also referenced below are acts which repeal prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Public Acts of 1879, Chapter 133, made it unlawful for any person, other than a citizen of Cumberland, Fentress, Morgan, Scott, Campbell, Overton, Putnam, White, Roane, Rhea, Bledsoe, and Van Buren counties, to hunt and kill deer for profit, or any species of game; but all the citizens in Tennessee may hunt and kill game in these counties for their own and their family's use. Fines for violators were set at \$50 for the first offense and \$100 for the second which would be recoverable before any justice of the peace on the suit of any person.
2. Public Acts of 1889, Chapter 179, declared it to be unlawful for any non-resident of the state to hunt, shoot, kill, catch, or carry away, game of any kind in Scott, Fentress, Pickett, Morgan, Cumberland, Bledsoe, Sequatchie, Van Buren, White, Putnam, Rhea, Clay, Campbell, Henry, Johnson, Carter, Sullivan, Meigs, and Claiborne counties. A minimum fine of \$50.00 was established for those failing to abide by the provisions of this act, half of which would go to the county, and half to the prosecutor.
3. Public Acts of 1893, Chapter 59, made it unlawful for any person to hunt, kill, or capture, any wild deer in Bledsoe, Cumberland, Rhea, Fentress, White, Hamilton, Warren, Johnson, Hancock, Unicoi, DeKalb, and Montgomery counties from December 1 to September 30 of the following year, and it was likewise unlawful for any non-resident, or resident, to hunt, kill, or capture, any wild turkey in Bledsoe, Rhea, Fentress, and While Counties from May 1 until October 1 of each year. The fines for offenders would range from \$25 to \$50. This act was required to be charged to the grand jury of the counties mentioned.
4. Private Acts of 1901, Chapter 213, made it unlawful for any person from any other county to hunt, capture, kill, shoot, wound, or destroy in any way or manner, any quail, partridge, wild turkey, or deer in Bledsoe County. It was also unlawful to kill quail in the enclosed lands of another at any time without permission and to export quail or partridges, for profit at any time. This act sets a closed season on deer in the county from January 1 to October 1 of each year. Fines ranged from \$10 to \$40 and discretionary jail sentences from ten to twenty-five days were ordered for all violators. The judges would charge this act to the grand jury which would also have inquisitorial powers on its own.
5. Acts of 1909, Chapter 360, defined a lawful fence for use in Bledsoe County. The first could be of barbed wire strands securely fastened to substantial posts, no more than 24 feet apart, with stays and braces not over eight feet apart and fastened to each wire. The bottom wire would be from 12 to 18 inches from the ground and the others at intervals above it often to twelve inches. The second lawful fence could be of smooth #10 wire, planks, or rails, on posts no more than ten feet apart, the planks to be at least four inches wide and one inch thick. The distances from the ground were the same as for the first fence. The wires, or other horizontal fence material, could be fastened to standing timber wherever possible. It was declared unlawful for sheep, goats, swine, or geese, to run at large. Fines ran from \$5.00 to \$10.00 for the first offense. The owner was liable for any damage done which could be placed in the form of a lien on the marauding animals. The person damaged could take up care for the trespassing stock and add the cost to the lien.
6. Acts of 1909, Chapter 502, defined a lawful fence for Bledsoe, Fentress, Grundy, Houston, Lake, Meigs, and Trousdale counties. Four strands of barbed, or smooth, wire securely fastened to substantial posts not over sixteen feet apart and not over eight feet at the corners and gates, the strands to be at twelve inch intervals from the ground. Nothing in this act shall be construed to conflict with any of the Railroad Acts. Damages, for which the owners of trespassing stock are declared liable, would be a lien on the stock until satisfied and their care and feeding might be added to the damages.
7. Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 686, applied to Bledsoe, Cumberland, Grundy, Marion, Sequatchie, and Van Buren counties and declared open seasons in which game could be lawfully hunted and killed as follows: on turkeys, from November 1 until January 1, of each year; on turkey gobblers, from April 1 until May 1; on quail, from November 1 to the following February 1; on deer, from November 1 until December 10; and one could kill squirrels anytime.
8. Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 719, amended Public Acts of 1915, Chapter 152, which was a state

law on games and fish, in Section 47, so as to exempt Bledsoe County from the provisions of that section, thus allowing citizens to fish with baited hook and line, and rod and line, in all the streams of Bledsoe County at all seasons of the year with no time limit.

9. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 748, amended Public Acts of 1919, Chapter 61, which was a statewide law regulating the care and keeping of dogs, so as to exempt Bledsoe, Van Buren, and Sequatchie counties from its operations and requirements.
10. Private Acts of 1929, Chapter 115, made it unlawful in Bledsoe County for any person to shoot any fox, or to destroy the den of any fox, or by means of a snare, trap, or other device, to catch, maim, or otherwise injure, any fox. This act was not to be applied when foxes were being chased by hounds, or were a threat to fowls, crops, or livestock. It was likewise termed to be unlawful to sell, or buy any fox pelt in the county. A fine from \$25 to \$50 awaited a convicted offender. The act was to be charged to grand jury which were also given inquisitorial powers. This act was repealed Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 35.
11. Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 35, repealed Private Acts of 1929, Chapter 115.

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