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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 Washington County. They are included herein for reference purposes. Also referenced below are acts which repeal prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Private Acts of 1820, Chapter 22, authorized William Massengill to retain his fish dam on the Watauga River provided that he did not obstruct the navigation of the river.
2. Private Acts of 1823, Chapter 69, authorized John Hoss, William Massengill and John Houston of Washington County to rebuild their fish traps in the Watauga River, but made them liable for any boats grounding thereon.
3. Private Acts of 1829-30, Chapter 302, authorized the county court of Washington County to appoint commissioners to superintend the removal of fish traps and dams in the Nolichucky River.
4. Private Acts of 1868-69, Chapter 26, authorized David and Daniel Regan to build a fish trap in the Nolichucky River within one mile of the mouth of Little Limestone Creek.
5. Public Acts of 1887, Chapter 71, made it a misdemeanor to kill partridge, quail, woodcock, pheasant or wild turkey, or to export such birds, in Washington County from April 1 to October 1.
6. Public Acts of 1893, Chapter 31, made it a misdemeanor to hunt or kill any partridge or quail in Washington County for a period of five years from the passage of the act.
7. Public Acts of 1899, Chapter 114, made it a misdemeanor to hunt or kill any partridge or quail in Washington County for a period of five years from the passage of the act.
8. Public Acts of 1899, Chapter 359, exempted Washington County from Public Acts of 1895, Chapter 359, the general law prohibiting fishing with nets, traps or baskets.
9. Acts of 1903, Chapter 450, exempted Washington County from the law requiring owners to keep their livestock on their own premises.
10. Acts of 1903, Chapter 455, established and made lawful a four wire, three plank or three rail or slate fence in Washington County.
11. Acts of 1905, Chapter 496, made it a misdemeanor for an owner to allow his livestock to run at large in Washington County.
12. Acts of 1905, Chapter 515, amended Acts of 1903, Chapter 169, the general game law, so as to provide that squirrels may be caught and killed in Washington County at anytime.
13. Acts of 1907, Chapter 185, amended Acts of 1903, Chapter 169, the general game law, so as to provide a "no close season" on squirrels in Washington County.
14. Acts of 1907, Chapter 213, made it a misdemeanor for an owner to allow his livestock to roam freely in Washington County.
15. Private Acts of 1911, Chapter 155, made it unlawful for the owners of livestock to permit them to run at large in Washington County. This act also provided for a remedy for damage committed by such livestock when allowed to run at large in violation of this act.
16. Private Acts, 1913, Chapter 271, made it a misdemeanor to hunt quail or partridge in Washington County for a period of five years from passage of the act.
17. Private Acts, 1915, Chapter 593, made it a misdemeanor to hunt or kill foxes, disturb their den or set traps for them (except around the owner's house or chicken house) in Washington County. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 135, so as to make it unlawful for any person to shoot any fox, destroy the den of any young fox or foxes, or to catch any foxes in Washington County.
18. Private Acts, 1915, Chapter 608, provided that from the last day in July to March 15th, fish could be caught by seine or trap or shot with a gun provided that the fishermen has permission of the owner of the land through which the stream runs. This act was amended by the Private Acts of 1919, Chapter 4, so as to provide additional legal means of fishing during this period.
19. Private Acts, 1915, Chapter 613, made it a misdemeanor to kill or take quail or partridges from January 1 to November 20 in Washington County.
20. Private Acts, 1921, Chapter 405, exempted Washington County from the provisions of Public Acts of 1919, Chapter 61, the general act licensing and regulating ownership of dogs.
21. Private Acts, 1923, Chapter 642, made it a misdemeanor to kill or take quails and partridges from November 25 to January 15 each year in Washington County.

22. Private Acts, 1929, Chapter 753, prohibited the hunting of quail if the ground was covered with snow. This act also provided that it was unlawful to hunt wild turkeys for two years from passage of the act.
23. Private Acts, 1931, Second Extra Session, Chapter 76, permitted the fishing with nets or traps in all streams in Washington County provided that the mesh was 2" or more.
24. Private Acts, 1935, Chapter 646, regulated the hunting and selling of gray foxes and rabbits in Washington County.
25. Private Acts of 1935, Chapter 684, allowed fishing in the Nolichucky and Watauga Rivers by Washington County residents with fish baskets, provided that the fish were for the fishermen's own use and not for sale.
26. Private Acts of 1953, Chapter 542, provided for a closed season upon foxes at all times in Washington County.
27. Private Acts of 1985, Chapter 62, would have authorized Washington County to establish and support an animal control program and to contract with local municipalities for this purpose, however, this act was disapproved by Washington County and never became law.

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