



April 02, 2025

Animals and Fish - Historical Notes

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS website (ctas.tennessee.edu). This website is maintained by CTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee county government.

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,

The University of Tennessee
County Technical Assistance Service
226 Anne Dallas Dudley Boulevard, Suite 400
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
615.532.3555 phone
615.532.3699 fax
www.ctas.tennessee.edu

Table of Contents

Animals and Fish - Historical Notes	3
--	----------

Animals and Fish - Historical Notes

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

1. Acts of 1897, Chapter 157, made it unlawful in the counties of Sumner, Tipton, Anderson, Rutherford, and Williamson to catch, kill, injure, or pursue, any quail, partridge, prairie chicken, grouse, or pheasant for a period of two years next following the passage of this act. It was further unlawful to destroy or purchase the eggs of the above cited birds. Violators were guilty of a misdemeanor. Fines for violators ran from \$2.00 to \$25 for each offense.
2. Acts of 1899, Chapter 337, declared that anyone in Sumner, Trousdale, and Robertson Counties who caught, killed, injured, or pursued any quail, partridge, grouse, or pheasant, for five years after the passage of the Act was guilty of a misdemeanor and could be fined up to \$25, or placed in jail for up to 30 days, or both. It was lawful to hunt quail with a gun from November 1 to January 1 of each year but not upon the enclosed lands of another without written permission from the owner, or occupant. It was also illegal to disturb the nests, or eggs, of these birds, or to sell and ship them from the county. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
3. Acts of 1901, Chapter 240, made it illegal to catch, hunt, trap, capture, kill, sell, or offer to sell, buy, or offer to buy, any dove, grouse, or pheasant, in Sumner County for a period of five years after passage of the act, except that doves could be hunted and killed during the months of August through November of each year. Fines ranged from \$10 to \$25 for offenders. This Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
4. Acts of 1903, Chapter 347, required all persons with female dogs over three months old to register them with the Circuit Court Clerk and prevent them from running at large. The Circuit Court Clerk would keep a book of information on these dogs, and the Clerk was to obtain a supply of metal clips to be fastened to the collars of the dogs which were registered. The owner of the dog paid a fee of \$3.00. Failure to comply was a misdemeanor.
5. Acts of 1903, Chapter 492, made it illegal to hunt or chase deer with dogs, or to shoot, or kill, maim, or wound deer in Sumner County for a period of five years from the passage of the act. Offenders could be fined from \$25 to \$50 for each offense. This Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
6. Acts of 1903, Chapter 564, declared that, in Sumner County, identified by the 1900 Federal Census figures, it was unlawful for livestock to run at large, and any person who, negligently, willfully, or knowingly, permitted such stock to run at large was guilty of a misdemeanor and could be fined from \$2.00 to \$5.00 for each act. Any damage wrought by the trespassing animals would be a lien on the animals which could also be taken up and cared for by the person damaged and the cost of doing so would also be a lien on the animals. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
7. Private Acts of 1907, Chapter 504, amended Acts of 1905, Chapter 76, which regulated the practice of veterinary medicine in the State to extend its provisions to cover the people of Sumner County, identified by the 1900 Federal Census. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
8. Private Acts of 1909, Chapter 405, required those who practiced veterinary medicine and surgery, with less than three years experience, to apply to the State Board of Examiners for a license. Regulations for holding tests and grading papers were included, for which proper records were to be kept. The license was to be recorded in the office of the County Court Clerk of the county where the practice was to take place. Anyone practicing without a license could be fined as in misdemeanor cases. This Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
9. Private Acts of 1911, Chapter 169, made it unlawful for cattle, horses, mules, hogs, sheep, and goats to run at large in Sumner County, identified by the 1910 Federal Census, and any person negligently, willfully, or knowingly permitting the same to occur was guilty of a misdemeanor and could be fined from \$2 to \$5 for each offending act. Any damage done constituted a lien on the animals as well as the cost of their care and keeping. Nothing in this act was to be construed as relieving the railroads of any liability. This Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
10. Private Acts of 1913 (Ex. Sess.), Chapter 32, declared it illegal in Sumner County, identified by use of the 1910 Federal Census figures, to shoot, kill, or injure, by any means whatsoever, any

- quail, partridge, or dove, except within the times mentioned in the act. Migratory birds could be killed at any time. It was also illegal to gig, shoot, spear, or kill by or with the use of dynamite, or other explosives, or to catch with one's hands or by grappling or with any seine, or wing net, any fish in any running stream, or river, in the county. However, seines not over 10 feet long could be used to obtain bait fish.
11. Private Acts of 1915, Chapter 135, amended Acts of 1903, Chapter 564, by making the population figures quoted conform to the 1910 Census, and by adding a provision to Section 2 which gave the Grand Juries of the county inquisitorial powers under the law and made it the duty of the Circuit and Criminal Judges to charge this act to the Grand Juries. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
 12. Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 552, amended Public Acts of 1915, Chapter 152, the State Game and Fish Law in Section 45, by adding a provision that the taking of fish of the sucker family by means of grab hooks, or by bow and arrow, would not be unlawful in Sumner County.
 13. Private Acts of 1927, Chapter 10, stated that every person in Sumner County, identified by use of the 1920 Federal Census figures, would be required to give to the Tax Assessor a record of each dog, more than six months old, being kept by him or her for which \$1 was to be paid for each male, or spayed female, and \$3.00 for each female (unspayed) more than six months old. Licenses were to be renewed every year, violators being subject to fines from \$10 to \$50 for each offense. All revenue derived hereunder would be placed in the "Sheep Fund". It was unlawful to allow dogs to run at large and any owner of sheep which were killed, or injured, by dogs might, by following the procedure outlined in the act, be compensated for the loss out of the "Sheep Fund".
 14. Private Acts of 1927, Chapter 333, amended Private Acts of 1927, Chapter 10, above, in Section 12 by reducing the time in which the owner of sheep injured, or killed, by dogs must report the same to the Trustee from 5 days to 48 hours; in Section 14 by requiring the owners to place metal tags on dogs and keep them on their collars all the time; and in Section 17 by providing that each person owning from one to eleven dogs pay \$10 instead of \$1.00 tax, and any one owning over eleven dogs and a kennel would pay \$30 per year.
 15. Private Acts of 1929, Chapter 59, expressly repealed Private Acts of 1927, Chapter 10, as amended.
 16. Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 339, made it lawful in Sumner County, identified by use of the 1930 Federal Census figures, at all times, to catch, take, or capture, fish, in any stream, river, or pond, with rod and line, or trot line, but it was unlawful to do the same with artificial flies, minnows, or any other type of artificial lure between the 15th day of April and the first day of July. It was likewise against the law to have in one's possession any seine other than a minnow seine, no longer than 10 feet and with meshes no less than ¼ inch. Fines for violators ranged from \$25 to \$100. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
 17. Private Acts of 1933, Chapter 649, legalized in Sumner County, identified by use of the 1930 Federal Census figures, fishing for both game and non-game fish with hook, rod and line, or trot line, using natural bait, in any month, or season, of the year, in any of the rivers, streams, or ponds, but it would not be lawful to take, catch, or capture, fish with an artificial fly, minnow, or any other type of artificial lure between April 1 and June 1 of each year. Fines ranged from \$25 to \$100. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
 18. Private Acts of 1935, Chapter 702, allowed any person who was heretofore engaged in the practice of veterinary medicine, with or without a license, for a period of 15 years next preceding the passage of the act to continue to practice, provided they obtained a certificate of good moral character from the County Court Clerk and filed the same with the State Board of Veterinary Examiners. This bill only applied to Sumner and Robertson Counties. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
 19. Private Acts of 1937, Chapter 196, made it legal in Sumner County to hunt, trap, and kill, any fur-bearing animals, including foxes, and to sell their pelts between November 15 and the following February 15.
 20. Private Acts of 1953, Chapter 227, declared it to be unlawful for any person in Sumner County to catch, or possess, minnows for the purpose of sale if they were taken from the streams of the county. More than 150 in one's possession, if caught in the county, was a misdemeanor, punishable by fines up to \$25. This Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1974, Chapter 369.
 21. Private Acts of 1953, Chapter 453, made it lawful to kill, or catch, foxes at any time or season of the year in Sumner County, but the act would not authorize the shooting of foxes while being

chased by dogs. This act was repealed by Public Acts of 1976, Chapter 272.

Source URL: <https://www.ctas.tennessee.edu/private-acts/animals-and-fish-historical-notes-39>