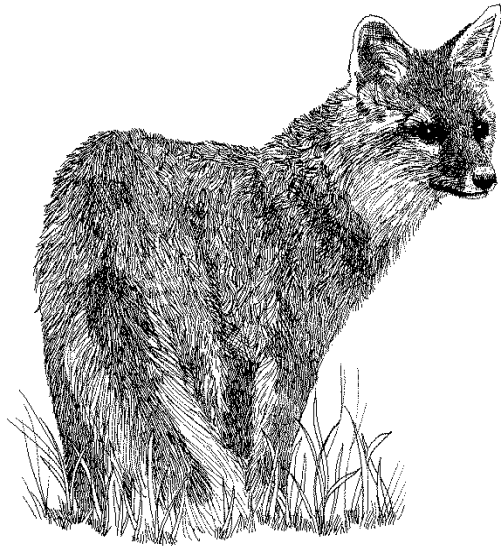


MAINE TAXIDERMY INFORMATION GUIDE



This Informational guide is a summary of policies, procedures, law and rules and is not the official printed version of Maine Revised Statutes or Department Rules



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, 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, which includes 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, show that the person has been convicted of 3 or more of the prohibited acts contained in Maine statute Title 12 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) Submit a completed taxidermy application with the non-refundable examination fee of \$125.00, to the department as directed on the taxidermy application <https://www.maine.gov/ifw/forms/>. Failure or refusal to provide the information requested on the application is sufficient grounds for denial of the application. An Applicant will be notified via email within 10 business days of receipt of the application, with additional instructions pertaining to an examination date and time.
- 2) Satisfactorily complete the appropriate written examination for that taxidermy license classification with a score of 70% or higher. Unsuccessful applicants must wait a minimum of 14 days before being eligible to retake the written exam for that taxidermy classification as outlined in Chapter 20.05(1) rules. **Note:** there are no written exams for Skull, Bone & Antler classification, Reptile and Amphibian classification or Freeze-Dried classification.
- 3) Satisfactorily complete the appropriate oral examination for that taxidermy license classification with a score of 70% or higher (this is an in-depth review of each required specimen and relevant taxidermy questions). Unsuccessful applicants must wait a minimum of 30 days before being eligible to retake the oral exam for that classification as outlined in Chapter 20.05(2) rules.

CLASSIFICATIONS FOR TAXIDERMY LICENSING:

- 1) Bird
- 2) Fish
- 3) Mammal
- 4) Head
- 5) General (includes all the above)
- 6) Reptile and Amphibian
- 7) Skull, Bone and Antler
- 8) Freeze-Dried

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TAXIDERMY ORAL EXAMINATION REVIEW CRITERIA:

An applicant must present to the review board the appropriate specimen for the classification. **Note:** the mount(s) must have been completed by the applicant within the past 3 years:

Bird applicant: one native standing bird mount with feet and legs visible, attached to the base (habitat).

Fish applicant: one native fish skin mount attached to the base (habitat).

Mammal applicant: one native full-size mammal, no larger than a fox attached to the base (habitat).

Head applicant: one native antlered whitetail deer head mount.

General applicant: all the above.

Reptile and Amphibian applicant: one native reptile or amphibian with or without habitat

Skull mounts: one skull with lower jaw at least 90% white and sealed

THE CRITERIA USED TO JUDGE EACH SPECIMEN:

Applicants should bring your best work for the oral examination review. There are no expectations to produce competition quality work for the examination review; however, the department does require and expect an applicant to produce a quality product (specimen), based on industry standards as a licensed professional in the art of Taxidermy in the State of Maine.

- 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 skin must be of the same color and texture.
- 3) **EARS, LEGS AND FEET:** Paper or plastic liners or other media should be used, and ears, legs and feet must be tight with no drumming or bridging.

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- 4) **RESTORATION OF COLOR:** Use of a trade acceptable media for filling must have a natural appearance with no overfilling or lack of filling when applicable. Color(s) have a natural appearance and if free from overpainting and over waxing.
- 5) **PRESERVATION:** Any part subject to deterioration must be adequately preserved. All specimens (especially fish) will be checked for objectionable odors (cigarette smoke, cleaners, sealants, decomposition, etc.).
- 6) **CLEANLINESS OF SPECIMEN:** Evidence of grease, oils, paint, dirt, borax, sawdust, etc. on specimen is not acceptable. Skull and lower jaw mounts should be clean, free of tissue, oils, odors, and should be whitened and sealed. **Note:** Skull and lower jaw should be at least 90% white.
- 7) **SUPPORT STRENGTH:** Wires, pins or rods used for support in legs, necks, wings, etc., must be of sufficient strength and not visible for their intended use. This includes attachment to the base / habitat.
- 8) **BASE / HABITAT:** Should not have pins, screws, rods, glue, or paint overspray visible. There should not be any hardware under the base and or habitat that can cause damage to a wall or table style furniture.

NEW APPLICANT TAXIDERMIST LICENSE FEE: After successful completion of the examination process, the applicant will be able to receive a taxidermy license for that classification(s) upon payment of a \$77 fee for a 3-year license pursuant <https://legislature.maine.gov/legis/statutes/12/title12sec12953.html>.

TAXIDERMIST LICENSE PERIOD: Taxidermy licenses issued pursuant to Title 12, Section 12953(7) will expire 3 years from the date of issuance unless revoked sooner. A taxidermist whose license is not suspended or revoked may renew the license every 3 years upon application by the licensee accompanied by a \$77 license fee.

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TAXIDERMY LICENSE RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS: Renewal applicants must submit department copies (yellow pages) of all client transaction entries from the issued Taxidermy Report Book at the time of renewal as outlined in Title 12, Section 12952(2-A) of a taxidermy license

<https://legislature.maine.gov/legis/statutes/12/title12sec12952.html>. **Note:** The department does not need the cover page or unused pages of the Report Book(s), only client transaction entry data information. Failure to comply with the submission record-keeping on department forms is a civil violation as outlined in statute <https://legislature.maine.gov/legis/statutes/12/title12sec12952.html>, and in rule, chapter 20.06(1) that states taxidermist who fails to follow these requirements (record-keeping) may be found incompetent or negligent in the practice of taxidermy and as a result may have their license suspended or revoked.

In addition to the violation of law and rule, it will result in a denial of your renewal taxidermy application until the record keeping and reporting requirement have been met.

REEXAMINATION: If a taxidermy license has lapsed for a 3-year period, the applicant must apply as a new taxidermist applicant and will need to take the written(s) and oral board examination for each classification). The application fee for a new applicant is \$125.00.

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 TAXIDERMY LICENSE: The Commissioner shall investigate all complaints made to the Department and all cases of noncompliance with, or violation of, the taxidermy laws and rules of Maine. Any person may register a complaint of fraud, deceit, gross negligence, incompetence 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.

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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.

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 place of business within ten days.

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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 roadkill, 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.

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>

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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

Little Brown Bat	New England Cottontail	Northern Bog Lemming
Northern Long-eared Bat	Tri-colored Bat	Eastern Small-footed Bat

REPTILES

Black Racer snake	Blanding's Turtle	Spotted Turtle
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U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST

<https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/threatened-and-endangered-species>

MIGRATORY BIRDS: To perform taxidermy services on migratory birds, a federal taxidermy permit must be obtained from the US Fish & Wildlife Service by visiting https://fwsepermits.servicenowservices.com/fws?id=fws_kb_view&sys_id=439acd311b1f50101f45dbdb_e54bcbdd or call 413-253-8200 (Northeast Regional Office).

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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 if 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, or [207-624-6550](tel:207-624-6550) and <https://www.maine.gov/dmr/science/species-information>.

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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 antibacterial or antimicrobial 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 <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/diseases-conditions/animal-borne-diseases/rabies>, 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 must be given written contractual agreement as required in Taxidermy Rules, Chapter 20.06(2) stating a brief description of the specimen, date of the transaction, the cost to complete the work, the amount of the deposit (if any), and the estimated completion of the final product.

Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Informational Contacts

Information Center: 207-287-8000

Complaint on a Taxidermists: 207-287-5290

Taxidermy Licensing: 207-287-5232

Maine Taxidermy Application: www.maine.gov/ifw/forms

Maine Taxidermy Rules: <https://www.maine.gov/sos/rulemaking/agency-rules/department-inland-fisheries-and-wildlife-rules>

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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.