

# Arizona Reptile and Amphibian Regulations 2009 & 2010



## Arizona Game and Fish Department

5000 W. Carefree Highway  
Phoenix, Arizona 85086

(602) 942-3000  
[www.azgfd.gov](http://www.azgfd.gov)



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## **ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES: TITLE 17 LAWS**

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### **A.R.S. 17-301**

#### **Times when wildlife may be taken; exceptions; methods of taking**

- A. A person may take wildlife, except aquatic wildlife, only during daylight hours unless otherwise prescribed by the commission. A person shall not take any species of wildlife by the aid or with the use of a jacklight, other artificial light, or illegal device, except as provided by the commission.
- B. A person shall not take wildlife, except aquatic wildlife, or discharge a firearm or shoot any other device from a motor vehicle, including an automobile, aircraft, train or powerboat, or from a sailboat, boat under sail, or a floating object towed by powerboat or sailboat except as expressly permitted by the commission. No person may knowingly discharge any firearm or shoot any other device upon, from, across or into a road or railway.

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### **A.R.S. 17-306**

#### **Importation, transportation, release or possession of live wildlife**

No person shall import or transport into the state or sell, trade or release within the state or have in his possession any live wildlife except as authorized by the commission or as defined in title 3, chapter 16.

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### **A.R.S. 17-331**

#### **License or proof of purchase required; violation of child support order**

- A. Except as provided by this title or commission order, a person shall not take any wildlife in this state without a valid license or a commission approved proof of purchase. The person shall carry the license or proof of purchase and produce it upon request to any game ranger, wildlife manager or peace officer.

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### **A.R.S. 17-371**

#### **Transportation, possession and sale of wildlife and wildlife parts**

- A. A person may transport in his possession his legally taken wildlife, or may authorize the transportation of his legally taken big game, provided such big game or any part thereof has attached thereto a valid transportation permit issued by the department. Such wildlife shall be transported in such manner that it may be inspected by authorized persons upon demand until the wildlife is packaged or stored. Species of wildlife, other than game species, may be transported in any manner unless otherwise specified by the commission. A person possessing a

valid license may transport lawfully taken wildlife other than big game given to him but in no event shall any person possess more than one bag or possession limit.

- D. A holder of a sport falconry license may transport one or more raptors that the person lawfully possesses under terms and conditions prescribed by the commission.

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**NOTE:**

*A valid fishing license is required for taking any aquatic wildlife, including amphibians or soft-shelled turtles, from public waters. See A.R.S. 17-331. A valid hunting license is required for taking reptiles other than soft-shelled turtles. See A.R.S. 17-331.*

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**GAME AND FISH COMMISSION RULES**

This summary of reptile and amphibian regulations is prepared for convenience only. It is not a legal document as it does not contain all the laws and regulations related to reptiles and amphibians. For additional information, contact and Arizona Game and Fish Department office.

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**R12-4-101****Definitions**

- A. In addition to the definitions provided in A.R.S. § 17-101, R12-4-401, and R12-4-501, the following definitions apply to this Chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:
22. "Waterdog" means the larval or metamorphosing stage of salamanders.

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**12-4-301****Restrictions for Taking Wildlife in Maricopa County Parks**

- A. Lands and water within the boundaries of all Maricopa County parks are open to hunting and trapping when a Commission order establishes an open season. Individuals may use only the following methods of take:
1. Archery hunting, when lawful for the wildlife taken under R12-4-304.
  2. Shotguns shooting shot, when taking small game, predatory, furbearing, and nongame animals during quail season in Lake Pleasant, White Tank Mountains, McDowell Mountain, and Estrella Mountain regional park, subject to subsection (F).
- B. An individual is prohibited from using rifled firearms within all Maricopa County parks except to take deer during deer seasons established by Commission order with concurrence of the Maricopa County Recreation Services Department.
- C. An individual shall not trap within any Maricopa County park except under the provisions of A.R.S. § 17-239, or when the Maricopa County Recreation Services Department and the Arizona Game and Fish Department determine that wildlife numbers need to be reduced in a park area because of a danger to the public or other wildlife.
- D. An individual shall not hunt within 1/4 mile of any developed picnic area, boat ramp, shooting range, golf course, or other recreational area developed for public use.
- E. Individuals entering any Maricopa County park for the purpose of hunting shall declare their intention of hunting and pay any fees required by Maricopa County Recreation Services Department at an entry station when entering the park, if the park has an entry station in operation.
- F. This rule does not authorize an individual to use a method of take that is prohibited by a city ordinance.

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**R12-4-303****Unlawful Devices, Methods, and Ammunition**

- A. In addition to the prohibitions prescribed in A.R.S. §§ 17-301 and 17-309, the following devices, methods, and ammunition are unlawful for taking any wildlife in this state. An individual shall not use or possess any of the following while taking wildlife:
1. Fully automatic firearms, including firearms capable of selective automatic fire;
  2. Tracer, armor-piercing, or full-jacketed ammunition designed for military use;
  3. Shotguns larger than 10 gauge or shotguns capable of holding more than five shells in the magazine, unless plugged with a one-piece filler that cannot be removed without disassembling the gun, and that limits the magazine capacity to five shells;
  4. Semiautomatic centerfire rifles with a magazine capacity of more than five cartridges, unless the magazine is modified with a filler or stop that cannot be removed without disassembling the magazine;
  5. Contrivances designed to silence, muffle, or minimize the report of a firearm;
  6. Poisoned projectiles, or projectiles that contain explosives; or
  7. Pitfalls of greater than 5-gallon size, explosives, poisons, or stupefying substances, except as permitted in A.R.S. § 17-239, or as allowed by a scientific collecting permit issued under A.R.S. § 17-238.
- C. An individual shall not use manual or powered jacking or prying devices to take reptiles or amphibians.

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**R12-4-304****Lawful Methods for Taking Wild Mammals, Birds, and Reptiles**

- F. An individual may take reptiles by any method not prohibited in R12-4-303 or R12-4-318 under the following conditions. An individual:
1. Shall check pitfall traps of any size daily, release non-target species, remove pitfalls when no longer in use, and fill any holes;
  2. Shall not use firearms at night; and
  3. May use artificial light while taking reptiles, if the light is not attached to or operated from a motor vehicle, motorized watercraft, watercraft under sail, or floating object towed by a motorized watercraft or a watercraft under sail.

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**R12-4-305****Possessing, Transporting, Importing, Exporting, and Selling Carcasses or Parts of Wildlife**

- A. For the purposes of this Section, "evidence of legality" means:
1. The wildlife is identifiable as the "legal wildlife" prescribed by Commission order, which may include evidence of species, gender, antler or horn growth, maturity and size; and
  2. The wildlife is accompanied by the applicable license, tag, separated portion of a tag under R12-4-302, stamp or permit required by law.
- B. An individual shall ensure that evidence of legality remains with the carcass or parts of a carcass of any wild mammal, bird, or reptile that the individual possesses or transports, until arrival at the individual's permanent abode, a commercial processing plant, or the place where the wildlife is to be consumed.
- G. An individual who sells, offers for sale, or exports the raw pelt of a bobcat taken in this state shall obtain a bobcat permit tag available for a fee as provided in R12-4-102 at Department offices and other locations at those times and places as determined and published by the Department, and shall ensure that the bobcat permit tag is locked through the mouth or eye openings so that it cannot be removed.
- I. An individual may import into this state carcasses or parts of carcasses of wildlife that have been lawfully taken in another state or country if accompanied by evidence of legality.

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**R12-4-311****Exemptions from Requirement to Possess an Arizona Fishing License while Taking Aquatic Wildlife**

- A. A fishing license is not required to take aquatic wildlife from private waters that are not open to the public and not managed by the Department.
- B. An individual may take terrestrial mollusks or crustaceans from private property without a fishing license.
- C. Any individual fishing in Arizona on the designated Saturday during National Fishing and Boating Week may fish without an Arizona fishing license if the individual's privilege to take aquatic wildlife has not been revoked by the Commission. The provisions of this subsection apply to all waters except the Colorado River adjacent to California and Nevada, where fishing without a license is limited to the shoreline, unless the state with concurrent jurisdiction removes licensing requirements on the same day. The provisions of this subsection do not apply to Reservation lands except as authorized by tribal governments.

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## **R12-4-312**

### **Special Use Permits and Stamps for Fishing on Waters with Shared Jurisdiction**

- A. Any individual fishing from a watercraft or other floating device or object on the waters of Lake Mead, Lake Mohave, or that portion of the Colorado River that forms the mutual boundary between Arizona and Nevada, shall have in possession:
  - 1. A valid Arizona-Colorado River special use stamp affixed to a valid Arizona fishing license, or
  - 2. A valid Nevada-Colorado River special use stamp affixed to a valid Nevada fishing license.
- B. Any individual fishing from the Arizona shorelines of the waters named in subsection (A), unless exempted by R12-4-310 or R12-4-311, shall have in possession either:
  - 1. A valid Arizona fishing license, unless exempted under A.R.S. § 17-335; or
  - 2. A valid Nevada-Colorado River special use stamp affixed to a valid Nevada fishing license.
- C. Any individual fishing in the waters of Mittry Lake or Topock Marsh, unless exempted by R12-4-310 or R12-4-311, shall have in possession either:
  - 1. A valid Arizona fishing license, unless exempted under A.R.S. § 17-335; or
  - 2. A valid Arizona-Colorado River special use permit stamp affixed to a valid California fishing license.
- D. Any individual fishing in the Arizona portion of Lake Powell, unless exempted by R12-4-310 or R12-4-311, shall have in possession either:
  - 1. A valid Arizona fishing license, unless exempted under A.R.S. § 17-335; or
  - 2. A valid Arizona-Lake Powell stamp affixed to a valid Utah resident fishing license.
- E. The requirements of this Section are in addition to those contained in A.R.S. §§ 17-342, 17-343, and 17-344.

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## **R12-4-313**

### **Lawful Methods of Taking Aquatic Wildlife**

- A. An individual may take aquatic wildlife as defined in A.R.S. § 17-101, subject to the restrictions prescribed in R12-4-303, R12-4-317, and this Section. Aquatic wildlife may be taken during the day or night and may be taken using artificial light as prescribed in A.R.S. § 17-301.
- B. The Commission may, through Commission order, prescribe legal sizes for possession of aquatic wildlife.
- D. In addition to angling, an individual may also take the following aquatic wildlife using the following methods, subject to the restrictions of R12-4-303, R12-4-317, and this Section:

- 4. Amphibians, soft-shelled turtles, mollusks, and crustaceans may also be taken by minnow trap, crayfish net, hand, or with any hand-held, non-motorized implement that does not discharge a projectile, unless otherwise permitted by this Section.
- 5. In addition to the methods described in subsection (D)(4) of this Section, bullfrogs may also be taken by bow and arrow, crossbow, or slingshot.

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## **R12-4-401**

### **Live Wildlife Definitions**

In addition to definitions given in A.R.S. § 17-101, and for the purposes of this Article, the following definitions apply:

- 24. "Restricted live wildlife" means wildlife that cannot be imported, exported, or possessed without a special license or lawful exemption. Restricted live wildlife are listed in R12-4-406.
- 26. "Special license" means any permit or license issued under this Article, including any additional stipulations placed on the license that authorizes specific activities normally prohibited by A.R.S. § 17-306 and R12-4-402.

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## **R12-4-402**

### **Live Wildlife: Unlawful Acts**

- A. An individual shall not perform any of the following activities with live wildlife unless authorized by this Chapter or A.R.S. Title 3, Chapter 16:
  - 1. Import any live wildlife into the state;
  - 2. Export any live wildlife from the state;
  - 3. Transport, possess, offer for sale, sell, sell as live bait, trade, give away, purchase, rent, lease, display, exhibit, propagate, stock, or release live wildlife within the state; or
  - 4. Kill any captive live wildlife;
- B. If an individual lawfully possesses wildlife, but holds it in a manner that poses an actual or potential threat to other wildlife, or the safety, health, or welfare of the public, the Department shall seize, quarantine, or hold the wildlife.

*Fishing on the Ft. Huachuca Military Reservation is open to the properly licensed general public. All fishermen must obtain a copy of the special Ft. Huachuca fishing regulations and comply with the listed provisions prior to fishing. For additional information, contact: Commander, U.S. Army Garrison, ASH-DEH-B, Ft. Huachuca, AZ 85613-6000.*

## **Amphibian Notes**

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1. A fishing or combination license is required for take of amphibians. Amphibians may be taken day or night per R12-4-313(E).
2. The possession limit for live bullfrogs legally held prior to closure of live bag limits (January 1, 1996, in Mohave, La Paz, and Yuma counties, or January 1, 1988, in all other counties) is 12 per person.
3. The Fort Huachuca Military Reservation controls access to the taking of aquatic wildlife on its installation.
4. The possession limit for native species of leopard frogs legally held prior to January 1, 1993, and for barking frogs legally held prior to January 1, 2005, when season closures went into effect, is 10 per species per person.
5. No waterdogs or salamanders may be taken in that portion of Santa Cruz County lying east and south of State Highway 82 or that portion of Cochise County lying west of the San Pedro River and south of State Highway 82.
6. Amphibians may not be taken at any time (or during periods specified) within the following areas:
  - (1) Posted boundaries of State or Federal hatcheries, except for Arizona Game and Fish Department sponsored fishing clinics.
  - (2) Posted boundary of the Region I regional headquarters in Pinetop.
  - (3) The Colorado River one-half mile upstream and one-half mile downstream from its confluence with the Little Colorado River.
  - (4) That portion of the Little Colorado River lying within the Grand Canyon National Park.
  - (5) Lee Valley Creek above Lee Valley Lake.
  - (6) Gap Creek between Honeymoon Cabin and its confluence with the Verde River.
  - (7) Mineral Creek in Apache County upstream of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest Boundary.
  - (8) Posted areas immediately above the dams at Upper Lake Mary, Alamo Lake and Lake Mead.
  - (9) Posted areas immediately below Davis, Hoover, Glen Canyon, Waddell (Lake Pleasant), Roosevelt, Horse Mesa and Mormon Flat dams.
  - (10) Posted, Spawning Pond Number 1 and Spawning Pond Number 2 located along the Salinity Canal north of Yuma.
  - (11) The Luna Lake Wildlife Area from April 1 through July 31.
  - (12) Posted portions of Alamo Lake.
  - (13) Posted portions of the Tonto Arm of Roosevelt Lake from January 1 through February 15 and from November 15 through December 31.

- (14) Posted portions of Mittry Lake from November 15 through February 15 annually.
  - (15) Posted portions of Becker Lake are closed to all public entry from December 15 through June 15.
  - (16) Posted portions of Lake Mead.
  - (17) Posted portions of Powers Butte Wildlife Area are closed to entry for the purpose of taking wildlife.
  - (18) Posted portions of Bog Hole Wildlife Area.
  - (19) Posted portions of Lake Havasu.
  - (20) Posted portions of Cienega Creek in Pima County.
  - (21) Aravaipa Creek in Pinal and Graham counties.
  - (22) Sycamore Creek in Santa Cruz County.
  - (23) Cibola Lake from the first Monday in September (Labor Day) through March 15.
  - (24) Posted portions of Martinez Lake from October 1 through March 1.
  - (25) Posted in accordance with and pursuant to ARS 17-303 and 304.
7. The Grand Canyon-Parashant, Vermillion Cliffs, Sonoran Desert, Ironwood Forest, and Aqua Fria National Monuments are open to the take of wildlife.

## Amphibians: Commission Order 41

*Statewide – As defined in A.R.S.17-101, excluding wildlife areas not opened for hunting (R12-4-802). Open Areas do not include any area closed to hunting, fishing, or trapping under A.R.S.17-303, 304, or Commission Rules R12-4-301, R12-4-801-803.*

Open Season Dates	Notes	Open Areas	Legal Amphibians
A. Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2009 Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2010	(1,3,6, and 7)	Statewide, except areas closed in Note 6	All amphibians, except those named in Subsections B, C, D, E, F, G, and H
<b>BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT:</b> Ten (10) per year or in possession of each species live or dead.			
B. Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2009 Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2010	(1,3,6, and 7)	Statewide, except areas closed in Note 6	Bufo cognatus (Great Plains toad), B. punctatus (red-spotted toad), Scaphiopus couchi (Couch's spadefoot), and Spea multiplicata (Mexican spadefoot)
<b>BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT:</b> Ten (10) per day or in possession per species live or dead.			
C. Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2009 Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2010	(1,3,6, and 7)	Statewide, except areas closed in Note 6	Eleutherodactylus augusti (barking frog)
<b>BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT:</b> Two (2) per year or in possession live or dead.			
D. Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2009 Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2010	(1,3,5,6, and 7)	Statewide, except areas closed in Notes 5 and 6	Ambystoma tigrinum (waterdog or tiger salamander)
<b>BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT:</b> Unlimited live or dead.			
E. Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2009 Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2010	(1,2,3, 6 and 7)	Statewide, including Havasu, Bill Williams River, Cibola, and Imperial National Wildlife Refuges (as permitted by refuge regulations; posted areas closed), except areas closed in Note 6	Rana catesbeiana (bullfrog)
<b>BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT:</b> Unlimited dead; see Note 2.			
F. Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2009 Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2010	(1,3,6, and 7)	Statewide, except areas closed in Note 6	All species in the genus Xenopus (clawed frogs) and Bufo marinus (giant toad)
<b>BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT:</b> Unlimited dead.			
G. Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2009 Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2010	(1,3,6, and 7)	That area east of the Colorado River; north of I-8; west of I-10 and I-17; and south of State Route 74, U.S. 60, and I-10; except that portion of the Hassayampa River between Wickenburg and Morristown and areas closed in Note 6	Rana berlandieri (Rio Grande leopard frog)
<b>BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT:</b> Unlimited dead.			
H. There is no open season on Rana tarahumarae (Tarahumara frog), Rana blairi (plains leopard frog), Rana chiricahuensis (Chiricahua leopard frog), Rana pipiens (northern leopard frog), Rana yavapaiensis (lowland leopard frog), Rana onca (relict leopard frog), and Rana subaquavocalis (Ramsey Canyon leopard frog); see Note 4.			

# Reptiles: Commission Order 43

Statewide – As defined in A.R.S.17-101, excluding wildlife areas not opened for hunting (R12-4-802). Open Areas do not include any area closed to hunting, fishing, or trapping under A.R.S.17-303, 304, or Commission Rules R12-4-301, R12-4-801-803.

Open Season Dates	Notes	Open Areas	Legal Reptiles
A. Jan 1, 2009 – Dec 31, 2009 Jan 1, 2010 – Dec 31, 2010	(1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)	Statewide, except areas closed in Notes 5, and 6	All reptiles, except those named in Subsections B, C, D, and E
BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT: Four (4) per year or in possession of each species live or dead.			
B. Jan 1, 2009 – Dec 31, 2009 Jan 1, 2010 – Dec 31, 2010	(1, 2, 5, 9)	Statewide, except areas closed in Note 5	Lichanura trivirgata (rosy boa), Senticolis triaspis (green ratsnake), Lampropeltis pyromelana (Sonoran mountain kingsnake), and Lampropeltis triangulum (milksnake; except no open season in Cochise County).
BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT: Two (2) per year or four (4) in possession of each species live or dead.			
C. Jan 1, 2009 – Dec 31, 2009 Jan 1, 2010 – Dec 31, 2010	(1, 2, 5, 9)	Statewide, except areas closed in Note 5	Sceloporus undulatus (Eastern fence lizard), Tantilla hobartsmithi (Smith's black-headed snake), and all species in the genera: Callisaurus (zebra-tailed lizard), Aspidoscelis (whiptails), Coleonyx (banded gecko), Cophosaurus (greater earless lizard), Holbrookia (lesser earless lizard), Urosaurus (tree lizard), Uta (side-blotched lizard), Hopsiglena (nightsnake), Leptotyphlops (threadsnakes), and Sonora (groundsnake)
BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT: Twenty (20) per day or in possession in the aggregate live or dead.			
D. Jan 1, 2009 – Dec 31, 2009 Jan 1, 2010 – Dec 31, 2010	(1, 5, 7, 8, 9)	Statewide, except areas closed in Notes 5, and 8	Apalone spinifera (spiny softshell), Trachemys scripta (slider), and all species of the family Chelydridae (snapping turtles)
BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT: Unlimited dead.			
E. There is no open season on Phrynosoma mcallii (flat-tailed horned lizard), Heloderma suspectum (Gila monster), Crotalus lepidus (rock rattlesnake), Crotalus pricei (twin-spotted rattlesnake), Crotalus willardi (ridge-nosed rattlesnake), Lampropeltis triangulum (milksnake; Cochise County only), Sistrurus catenatus (massasauga), Thamnophis eques (Mexican gartersnake), Thamnophis rufipunctatus (narrow-headed gartersnake), Gopherus agassizii (desert tortoise), and Terrapene ornata (ornate box turtle); see Notes 3 and 4.			

## Reptile Notes:

- A hunting or combination license is required for take of reptiles other than softshell turtles. Reptiles may be taken day or night. See R12-4-304 for restrictions on the use of artificial light. By law, softshell turtles are considered aquatic wildlife and a fishing or combination license is required for take. Methods of take are prescribed at R12-4-313(E).
- Per R12-4-404, progeny of lawfully held reptiles other than desert tortoises may, for twelve months from date of hatching or birth, be held in captivity in excess of the stated limits. Before or upon reaching twelve months of age, such progeny must be disposed of by gift to another person or as directed by the Department.
- Per R12-4-407.1, desert tortoises legally held prior to April 28, 1989, may be possessed, transported and propagated. Possession limit is one desert tortoise per person. Progeny of lawfully held desert tortoises may, for twenty-four months from date of hatching, be held in captivity in excess of the stated limit. Before or upon reaching twenty-four months of age, such progeny must be disposed of by gift to another person or as directed by the Department.
- The possession limit for massasaugas legally held prior to January 1, 1989, when season closure went into effect, is four (4) per person. The possession limit for Mexican gartersnakes, narrow-headed gartersnakes, and ornate box turtles legally held prior to January 1, 2005, when season closure went into effect, is four (4) per person. See Note 2.
- The Fort Huachuca Military Reservation, the Yuma Proving Ground, and Camp Navajo control access to hunting on their installations.
  - Chuckwallas (genus *Sauromalus*) may not be taken within the boundaries of Phoenix South Mountain Park.
  - The Fort Huachuca Military Reservation controls access to the taking of aquatic wildlife on its installation.
  - Turtles may not be taken at any time (or during periods specified) within the following areas:
    - Posted boundaries of State or Federal hatcheries, except for Arizona Game and Fish Department sponsored fishing clinics.
    - Posted boundary of the Region I regional headquarters in Pinetop.
    - The Colorado River one-half mile upstream and one-half mile downstream from its confluence with the Little Colorado River.
    - That portion of the Little Colorado River lying within the Grand Canyon National Park.
    - Lee Valley Creek above Lee Valley Lake.
    - Gap Creek between Honeymoon Cabin and its confluence with the Verde River.
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  - Posted in accordance with and pursuant to ARS 17-303 and 304.
- The Grand Canyon-Parashant, Vermilion Cliffs, Sonoran Desert, Ironwood Forest, and Aqua Fria National Monuments are open to the take of wildlife as permitted by Monument regulations.

## **Arizona Game and Fish Department**

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