



Alaska Rodent Laws

To protect Alaska's wildlife and the habitats they depend on, and to protect human health, Alaska has strict laws and regulations pertaining to the possession and control of non-native rodents including Muridae (old world) rats and mice. These laws are summarized below but this is not a complete list of applicable laws and regulations. For more information, please contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game at 1-800-INVASIV (468-2748) or dfg.dsf.InvasiveSpecies@alaska.gov.

Summary:

1. Only white (albino) rats may be possessed as pets. White, waltzing, singing, shaker, and piebald mice may also be possessed as pets. Note that some local municipalities have stricter possession requirements.
2. Rats and mice may never be released to the wild.
3. Taking (killing) of "deleterious exotic wildlife" (including rats and mice) with rodenticides is allowed in certain situations.
4. Feeding of "deleterious exotic wildlife" (including rats and mice) or negligently leaving food or garbage in a manner that attracts them is prohibited.
5. A vessel (or other means of transportation) is prohibited from harboring rats or mice or from entering Alaskan waters if they do harbor them.
6. A facility (including harbors, ports, airports, railroads, landfills, warehouses, storage yards, cargo handling sites, and establishments that serve, process, or store human or animal food) is prohibited from harboring rats or mice; and if they do, they must notify the department and eradicate or control them.

5 AAC 92.029 Permit for possessing live game (a) Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, or in AS 16, no person may possess, import, release, export, or assist in importing, releasing, or exporting, live game, unless the person holds a possession permit issued by the department.

(b) The following species, not including a hybrid of a game animal and a species listed in this subsection, may be possessed, imported, exported, bought, sold, or traded without a permit from the department but may not be released into the wild: ... White rat (*Rattus norvegicus* Var. *albinus*); Mice: white, waltzing, singing, shaker, piebald (*Mus musculus* Var.).

(d) Under this section, and in accordance with the definition of "game" in AS 16.05.940 (which includes feral domestic animals), a (1) game animal defined as deleterious exotic wildlife or a nonindigenous gallinaceous bird is feral if the animal is not under direct control of an owner, including being confined in a cage or other physical structure, or being restrained on a leash; the commissioner may capture, destroy, or dispose of any feral deleterious exotic wildlife or feral nonindigenous gallinaceous bird in an appropriate manner.

5 AAC 92.080(2) Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions. The following methods of taking game are prohibited: (2) with the use of a poison or substance that temporarily incapacitates game, except with the written consent of the board; or with the use of an Electronic Control Device (ECD) Taser-type device that temporarily incapacitates game, except under a permit issued by the department; however, the use of a poison for taking deleterious exotic wildlife within a building, vessel, port, vehicle, or aircraft, is authorized without board approval when using Department of Environmental Conservation registered pesticides in their approved manner under 18 AAC 90.

5 AAC 92.230 Feeding of game. (a) Except as provided in (b) of this section or under the terms of a permit issued by the department, a person may not (1) negligently feed a moose, deer, elk, sheep, bear, wolf, coyote, fox, wolverine, or deleterious exotic wildlife, or negligently leave human food, animal food, mineral supplements, or garbage in a manner that attracts these animals; (2) intentionally feed a moose, deer, elk, sheep, bear, wolf, coyote, fox, wolverine, or deleterious exotic wildlife, or intentionally leave human food, animal food, mineral supplements, or garbage in a manner that attracts these animals. (b) The prohibitions described in (a) of this section do not apply to the use of bait for trapping furbearers or deleterious exotic wildlife, or hunting bears under 5 AAC 92.044, or hunting wolf, fox, or wolverine with bait as described in 5 AAC 92.210, and elsewhere under 5 AAC 84 - 5 AAC 92.

5 AAC 92.141. Transport, harboring, or release of live Muridae rodents prohibited (a) It is unlawful, without a permit issued by the department, for anyone to transport or harbor live uncaged Muridae rodents in a vessel, vehicle, aircraft, structure being translocated, or other means of conveyance, or to enter this state, including the waters of this state, while transporting or harboring live uncaged Muridae rodents.

(b) Except for a facility where a Muridae rodent eradication plan has been developed and implemented, it is unlawful for the owner or operator of any facility to harbor live uncaged Muridae rodents. The owner or operator of any facility in which live uncaged Muridae rodents or signs of such rodents including tracks, droppings, chew marks, and nests have been found shall (1) notify the department in writing within 30 days of detection; (2) develop and implement a written ongoing rodent eradication or control plan, the intent of which is to eliminate all Muridae rodents or prevent the spread of Muridae rodents beyond the facility, and which shall be provided to the department upon request; and (3) allow representatives of the Department of Fish and Game or the Department of Public Safety to inspect the facility during business hours for compliance with this section.

(c) in this section, (1) "facility" includes harbors, ports, airports, railroads, landfills, warehouses, storage yards, cargo handling sites, and establishments that serve, process, or store human or animal food; (2) "uncaged" means not intentionally confined by the owner of facility or rodent to a cage or similar container that prevents escape.

5 AAC 92.990 Definitions

(a)(21) "deleterious exotic wildlife" includes English sparrow; racoon; starling; unconfined or unrestrained Belgian hare, Muridae rodent, rockdove; feral ferret, feral swine; Eurasian collared dove.

(a)(42) "invasive species" means a nonnative species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health; this includes deleterious exotic wildlife.

(a)(49) “Muridae rodent” includes true mice and rats, gerbils, and their relatives.

(a)(53) “nuisance wildlife” includes

(A) a feral domestic bird or mammal, deleterious exotic wildlife, unclassified game, small game, fur animals or furbearers, except wolf, wolverine, or lynx, or migratory bird for which there is a federal depredation order for this state issued under 50 CFR Sec. 21.43;

(B) an animal that invades or comes to occupy a dwelling, vessel, vehicle, structure, or storage container; causes property damage; or is an invasive species or introduced nonnative species that poses immediate or long-term threats to human health, safety, or property or to native wildlife, wildlife health, or habitat.

Penalties for Violation of State Rodent Laws

Troopers from the Division of Alaska Wildlife Troopers have the authority and responsibility to enforce state wildlife statutes and regulations. Violations are a Class A misdemeanor and require a mandatory court appearance (unless identified as a bailable violation). For an individual, a Class A misdemeanor carries a fine of up to \$25,000 and up to one year in jail. For organizations (including any commercial entity, group, or entity other than a sole individual), a Class A misdemeanor carries a fine of up to \$500,000 and (1) up to 3 times the pecuniary (economic) gain realized by the defendant as a result of the offense, or (2) up to 3 times the pecuniary damage caused by the defendant to another, or to the property of another as a result of the offense. (AS 16.05.925(a))