

House Bill 277

By: Representatives Shaw of the 176th, Maddox of the 172nd, Roberts of the 154th, Williams of the 165th, Black of the 174th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 1 of Article 1 of Chapter 3 of Title 27 of the Official Code of Georgia
2 Annotated, relating to general provisions relative to hunting, so as to regulate the baiting and
3 hunting of deer and feral hogs; to change certain provisions relating to unlawful enticement
4 of game; to change certain provisions relating to seasons and bag limits, promulgation of
5 rules and regulations by the Board of Natural Resources, possession of more than bag limit,
6 and reporting number of deer killed; to change certain provisions relating to restrictions on
7 hunting feral hogs; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 Part 1 of Article 1 of Chapter 3 of Title 27 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
11 relating to general provisions relative to hunting, is amended in Code Section 27-3-9, relating
12 to unlawful enticement of game, by revising subsections (a) and (b) and by adding a new
13 subsection, to read as follows:

14 "(a)(1) It shall be unlawful for any person to place, expose, deposit, distribute, or scatter
15 any corn, wheat, or other grains, salts, apples, or other feeds or bait so as to constitute a
16 lure or attraction or enticement for any game bird or game animal on or over any area
17 where hunters are or will be hunting; ~~provided, however, that it shall be lawful to hunt~~
18 ~~deer within the vicinity of such feeds if the hunter is at least 200 yards away from and not~~
19 ~~within sight of the feed or bait.~~

20 (2) The prohibitions of paragraph (1) of this subsection shall not apply to feeding or
21 baiting deer or feral hogs, except as otherwise provided by subsection (b.1) of this Code
22 section.

23 (b)(1) Except as otherwise provided by law or regulation, it shall be unlawful for any
24 person to hunt any game bird or game animal upon, over, around, or near any place where
25 any such feed or bait has been placed, exposed, deposited, distributed, or scattered so as
26 to constitute a lure, attraction, or enticement to such birds or animals. It shall also be

27 unlawful to hunt any game animal or game bird upon, over, around, or near any such
 28 place for a period of ten days following the complete removal of all such feed or bait.

29 (2) The prohibitions of paragraph (1) of this subsection shall not apply to the hunting of
 30 deer or feral hogs, except as otherwise provided by subsection (b.1) of this Code section.

31 (b.1)(1) The board may by rule or regulation restrict the feeding or baiting of deer or
 32 feral hogs and the hunting of deer or feral hogs within the vicinity of such feed or bait in
 33 any county wherein there is a documented occurrence of a communicable disease in deer
 34 and in any county adjoining such county. Such restriction may be imposed in such
 35 county and any adjoining county for a period of up to and including 180 days and may
 36 be extended for additional periods of up to and including one year each upon
 37 documentation that the communicable disease is still present in deer in such county. It
 38 shall be unlawful for any person to feed, bait, or hunt deer or feral hogs in violation of
 39 any restriction imposed pursuant to this paragraph.

40 (2) The department shall give notice of such restriction by mail or electronic means to
 41 each person holding a current license to hunt whose last known address is within a
 42 restricted county. The department may place or designate the placement of signs and
 43 markers so as to give notice of such restriction."

44 **SECTION 2.**

45 Said part is further amended by revising subsections (a), (b), and (c) of Code Section
 46 27-3-15, relating to seasons and bag limits, promulgation of rules and regulations by the
 47 Board of Natural Resources, possession of more than bag limit, and reporting number of deer
 48 killed, as follows:

49 "(a) It shall be unlawful to hunt the following game species at any time during the periods
 50 set forth below:

51	<u>Game Species</u>	<u>Closed Season</u>
52	(1) Quail	March 16 — Oct. 31
53	(2) Grouse	March 1 — Oct. 14
54	(3) Turkey	
55	(A) Gobblers	May 22 — March 14
56	(B) Hens	All year

57	(4) Deer	Jan. 16 — Sept. 7; except that the
58		closed season may be Feb. 1 - Sept.
59		7 in those counties specified as
60		having an extended archery-only
61		open season in paragraph (4) of
62		subsection (b) of this Code section;
63		<u>and except that the beginning date of</u>
64		<u>the closed season shall be the</u>
65		<u>Tuesday following the third Monday</u>
66		<u>in January in those counties south of</u>
67		<u>and including Harris, Talbot, Taylor,</u>
68		<u>Macon, Peach, Houston, Twiggs,</u>
69		<u>Wilkinson, Washington, Jefferson,</u>
70		<u>and Burke</u>
71	(5) Bobcat	March 1 — Oct. 14
72	(6) Opossum	March 1 — Oct. 14, for that area
73		north of and including Haralson,
74		Paulding, Bartow, Cherokee,
75		Forsyth, Hall, Banks, Franklin, and
76		Hart counties
77	(7) Rabbit	March 1 — Oct. 31
78	(8) Raccoon	March 1 — Oct. 14, for that area
79		north of and including Carroll,
80		Fulton, Gwinnett, Barrow, Clarke,
81		Oglethorpe, Taliaferro, Wilkes, and
82		Lincoln counties
83	(9) Squirrel	March 1 — August 14
84	(10) Bear	Jan. 16 — Sept. 7
85	(11) Sea turtles and their eggs	All year
86	(12) Cougar (<i>Felis concolor</i>)	All year
87	(13) Alligators	Nov. 1 — March 31
88	(14) Migratory game birds	March 11 — August 31
89	(b) It shall be unlawful to hunt the following game species at any time during the period	
90	set forth below, except that it shall not be unlawful to hunt the following game species	
91	during such periods or portions thereof, and in such number not to exceed the following	

92 numbers, as may be designated by the board as open seasons and bag limits for such
 93 species:

94	<u>Game Species</u>	<u>Maximum Open Season</u>	<u>Maximum Bag Limits</u>	
			<u>Daily</u>	<u>Season</u>
95				
96	(1) Quail	Nov. 1 — March 15	12	No limit
97	(2) Grouse	Oct. 15 — Feb. 29	3	No limit
98	(3) Turkey	March 15 — May 21	3	3
99	gobblers			
100	(4) Deer	Sept. 8 — Jan. 15; except that there may	The daily limit shall be ten antlerless deer and two antlered bucks. The season limit shall be ten antlerless deer and two antlered bucks. Only one antlered buck may have less than four points one inch or longer on one side of the antlers. Up to two deer per managed hunt may be allowed on wildlife management areas without complying with the state-wide bag limit	
101		be also an extended archery-only open		
102		season Jan. 1– Jan. 31 in the counties of		
103		Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Forsyth, Fulton,		
104		Gwinnett, and Rockdale due to the extra		
105		need for herd reduction in that urban and		
106		suburban area of the state; <u>and except</u>		
107		<u>that the ending date of the open season</u>		
108		<u>shall be the third Monday in January in</u>		
109		<u>those counties south of and including</u>		
110		<u>Harris, Talbot, Taylor, Macon, Peach,</u>		
111		<u>Houston, Twiggs, Wilkinson,</u>		
112		<u>Washington, Jefferson, and Burke</u>		
113				
114				
115				
116				
117				
118				
119				
120	(5) Bobcat	Oct. 15 — Feb. 29	No limit	No limit
121	(6) Opossum	(A) Oct. 15 — Feb. 29, for that area	No limit	No limit
122		north of and including Haralson,		
123		Paulding, Bartow, Cherokee, Forsyth,		
124		Hall, Banks, Franklin, and Hart counties;		
125		and		
126		(B) Jan. 1 — Dec. 31 for the	No limit	No limit
127		remainder of the state		

128	(7) Rabbit	Nov. 1 — Feb. 29	12	No limit
129	(8) Raccoon	(A) Oct. 15 — Feb. 29, for that area	No limit	No limit
130		north of and including Carroll, Fulton,		
131		Gwinnett, Barrow, Clarke, Oglethorpe,		
132		Taliaferro, Wilkes, and Lincoln counties;		
133		and		
134		(B) Jan. 1 — Dec. 31 for the	No limit	No limit
135		remainder of the state		
136	(9) Squirrel	Aug. 15 — Feb. 29	12	No limit
137	(10) Fox	Jan. 1 — Dec. 31	No limit	No limit
138	(11) Migratory	Sept. 1 — March 10	Subject to limits set	
139	game		by the federal	
140	birds		government and	
141			adopted by the board	
142	(12) Bear	Sept. 8 — Jan. 15	2	2
143	(13) Alligators	April 1 — Oct. 31	Subject to limits	
144			adopted by the board	

145 (c) In accordance with subsection (b) of this Code section and as may be appropriate,
 146 based on sound wildlife management principles, the board is authorized to promulgate rules
 147 and regulations establishing open seasons on a state-wide, regional, or local basis and
 148 establishing daily and season bag limits; provided, however, that the ending date of the
 149 open season shall be the third Monday in January in those counties south of and including
 150 Harris, Talbot, Taylor, Macon, Peach, Houston, Twiggs, Wilkinson, Washington, Jefferson,
 151 and Burke."

152 **SECTION 3.**

153 Said part is further amended by revising subsection (a) of Code Section 27-3-24, relating to
 154 restrictions on hunting feral hogs, as follows:

155 "(a) It shall be unlawful to hunt, or engage in the hunting of, feral hogs:

156 (1) Upon the lands of another or enter upon the lands of another in pursuit of feral hogs
 157 without first obtaining permission from the landowner or lessee of such land or the lessee
 158 of the game rights of such land;

159 (2) Upon any land which is posted without having the permission required by paragraph
 160 (1) of this subsection in writing and carried upon the person;

161 (3) ~~Upon, over, around, or near any land or place upon which any corn, wheat, or other~~
 162 ~~grains, salts, apples, or other feeds or bait which would constitute a lure, attraction, or~~

163 ~~enticement for any feral hog has been placed, exposed, deposited, distributed, or scattered~~
164 ~~or upon, over, around, or near any such place for a period of ten days following the~~
165 ~~complete removal of all such feed or bait; provided, however, this paragraph shall not~~
166 ~~prohibit the use of bait described in this paragraph for the purpose of trapping feral hogs~~
167 ~~or hunting feral hogs by means other than a firearm or bow and arrow~~ Reserved;

168 (4) From within a vehicle or while riding on a vehicle at night and with the use of a light;

169 (5) At night with a light, except that a light which is carried on the person of a hunter,
170 affixed to a helmet or hat worn by a hunter, or part of a belt system worn by a hunter may
171 be used for locating feral hogs; or

172 (6) During the firearms deer season unless the hunter and each person accompanying the
173 hunter are wearing a total of at least 500 square inches of daylight fluorescent orange
174 material as an outer garment and such material or garment is worn above the waistline,
175 and may include a head covering."

176

SECTION 4.

177 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.