

Juris-Imprudence

When Laws Go Overboard

Laws make civilization possible, but some laws make civilization cringe. This is a collection of actual animal-related laws still on the books that make you wonder what the authorities were thinking.

ALABAMA: No more than eight rabbits can reside on the same block in Tuscumbia. In Mobile, it is illegal for pigeons to eat pebbles from composite roofs.

ALASKA: While it is legal to shoot bears, you may not wake a sleeping bear for the purpose of taking a photograph. It is also illegal to push a live moose out of a moving airplane. If you are in Fairbanks, it is also illegal to feed alcoholic beverages to a moose.

ARIZONA: Shooting or hunting camels is banned. *

CALIFORNIA: Setting a mousetrap requires a hunting license. One may not have a hippopotamus in one's possession in Los Angeles.

FLORIDA: Key West prohibits turtle racing within the city limits.

GEORGIA: In Atlanta, it is against the law to tie a giraffe to a telephone pole or a street lamp.

KANSAS: It is illegal to shoot rabbits while in a motorboat. If you live in the city of Newton, driving buffalo through the streets will land you in jail.

KENTUCKY: Any person who displays, handles, or uses any kind of reptile in connection with any religious service or gathering shall be fined not less than fifty dollars nor more than one hundred dollars.

MARYLAND: In Baltimore, it is illegal to take a lion to the movies or to give away your parrot.

MICHIGAN: In Detroit, it is illegal to tie crocodiles to a fire hydrant.

MINNESOTA: You are forbidden to tease skunks.

MISSISSIPPI: You cannot kill a squirrel with a gun in the Canton, Mississippi courtroom.

MISSOURI: It is against the law to carry a bear down a highway unless it is caged. In the city of Stillwater, one may not have a bat as a pet. **

NEVADA: Riding a camel on a highway is a traffic violation. *

NEW JERSEY: It is a crime to feed whiskey or offer cigarettes to animals at the Mansville City Zoo.

NEW YORK: Frogs may be taken from their ponds from June 16 to September 30, but only between sunrise and sunset. In New York City, you are forbidden from shooting rabbits from the back end of a Third Avenue streetcar when it is moving. If you drive a horseless carriage, you must have someone walk before your vehicle waving a lantern to warn oncoming horses. In Woodstock, you may not walk your bear on the street without a leash.

NORTH CAROLINA: It is against the law to use elephants to plow cotton fields or to take a deer swimming in water above its knees. In the city of Statesville, you may not race rabbits in the streets.

OHIO: Whale fishing in any of the state's waters is prohibited on a Sunday. In Cleveland, you have to obtain a hunting license to set a mousetrap. In Toledo, throwing a snake at someone is illegal.

OKLAHOMA: Until recently, it was illegal to fish for whales off the coast of Oklahoma. ***

SOUTH CAROLINA: It is illegal to walk your pet alligator down Main Street in Charleston.

TENNESSEE: You can't shoot any game other than whales from a moving automobile. In Memphis, frogs may not croak after 11 PM.

TEXAS: Camels may not wander the streets unattended in the City of Galveston. *

UTAH: Birds have the right of way on all highways.

** Camels were introduced into the west by the US Cavalry as an experiment. One notorious animal went mad and would hunt down people and trample them to death. Since not many people had seen a camel before, the animal became enlarged into a mythical monster called "The Red Ghost."*

*** Undoubtedly the Stillwater Bat Law was meant to control the spread of rabies which bats are prone to carry.*

**** Ironically, in Paleozoic Times, Oklahoma had plenty of ocean but no whales! If you can tell us if the law had bipartisan support or deeply divided Republicans and Democrats, send us the juicy details.*