

By: Representatives Pierce, Eaton

To: Game and Fish

HOUSE BILL NO. 528

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 49-7-31, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 REQUIRE THE COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES AND PARKS TO ADOPT
3 RULES OR REGULATIONS TO ALLOW THE HUNTING OF DEER OVER CORN, GRAIN
4 OR OTHER SUPPLEMENTAL FEED; TO REQUIRE DEER HUNTERS WHO FEED DEER
5 WITH BAIT TO PURCHASE A PERMIT AND TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE
6 LOCATION OF THE FEEDER OR FEED; TO AMEND SECTION 49-7-33,
7 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, IN CONFORMITY THERETO; AND FOR RELATED
8 PURPOSES.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

10 **SECTION 1.** Section 49-7-31, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
11 amended as follows:

12 49-7-31. (1) The open season for game birds and game
13 animals shall be as follows:

14 (a) On bobwhite quail: The season shall open on
15 Thanksgiving day and run through the first Saturday in March next
16 following.

17 (b) On pheasant: There shall be no open season on
18 pheasant.

19 (c) On wild turkey: The commission shall fix the
20 spring season between the Saturday nearest March 20 and May 1 in
21 designated areas. In addition, the commission may fix special
22 fall either-sex seasons.

23 (d) On squirrel:

24 (i) Zone 1: For areas north of Highway 82 plus
25 those portions of Sunflower County and Washington County south of
26 Highway 82 the season shall open on the Saturday nearest October 1
27 and run through February 28.

28 (ii) Zone 2: For areas between Highway 82 and
29 Highway 84, plus such portions of the state south of Highway 84



30 and west of Interstate 55, the season shall open on the Saturday
31 nearest October 15 and run through February 28.

32 (iii) Zone 3: For areas south of Highway 84 and
33 east of Interstate 55 the season shall open on the last Saturday
34 in October and run through February 28.

35 (e) On deer:

36 (i) With bow and arrow: October 1 through the
37 Friday prior to Thanksgiving.

38 (ii) With guns and with dog: From the Saturday
39 prior to Thanksgiving through December 1.

40 (iii) With primitive weapons and without dogs:
41 December 2 through December 15.

42 (iv) With guns and without dogs: December 16
43 through December 23. However, the commission may allow hunting
44 statewide or in specific areas with any legal weapon which it may
45 designate without dogs after the end of the last season for
46 hunting deer with guns and with dogs, but the season with legal
47 designated weapons and without dogs shall not extend beyond
48 January 31.

49 (v) With guns and with dogs: December 24 through
50 a date fixed by the commission that will provide a total of
51 thirty-nine (39) days of hunting deer with guns and with dogs when
52 added to the number of days provided for hunting deer with guns
53 and with dogs in paragraph (e)(ii).

54 (vi) When hunting deer during any gun season on
55 deer, a hunter must wear in full view five hundred (500) square
56 inches of solid unbroken fluorescent orange.

57 (vii) In order to set and regulate the deer
58 seasons, the commission may:

59 1. Set and regulate the deer seasons on
60 wildlife management areas which it administers;

61 2. Allow the harvesting of antlerless deer in
62 the districts or zones upon the recommendation of the executive



63 director based upon good and substantial quantitative data and
64 research evaluations that demonstrate that the harvesting is
65 necessary to properly manage the herd. The commission, only upon
66 the recommendation of the executive director, may allow the
67 harvesting of antlerless deer during the deer season with guns and
68 with dogs by a majority vote of the commission. Nothing in this
69 section prohibits the harvesting of either sex deer by landowners
70 or leaseholders on private lands under a deer management program
71 prescribed or approved by the executive director.

72 3. Provide a special permit for the
73 harvesting of deer when they are depredating and destroying crops.
74 The department shall supervise the harvesting and provide for the
75 salvaging of the meat of the animals. The commission may
76 authorize the department to assist any farmer in this state, who
77 sustains crop damage by wildlife, in eradication of the problem
78 wildlife.

79 (viii) The commission, by rule or regulation,
80 shall authorize the hunting of deer over corn, grain or other
81 supplemental feed during all deer hunting seasons subject to the
82 following conditions:

83 1. The hunter must purchase a Twenty-five
84 Dollar (\$25.00) permit from an area officer or local conservation
85 officer.

86 2. The hunter must provide information on the
87 specific location of the feeder or the place where corn, grain or
88 feed is located.

89 3. The feeder may be located only on
90 privately owned property.

91 (ix) The commission shall establish a special
92 hunting season for youth under the age of sixteen (16) and for
93 handicapped persons in the Natchez State Park. The commission
94 shall also establish a primitive weapon season in the Natchez
95 State Park. The selection of participants in the primitive weapon



96 season shall be by public drawing from all qualified applications.
97 The commission shall set the number of permits to be issued and
98 the length of the special seasons. The commission may also
99 establish a special hunting season for youth and handicapped
100 persons or a primitive weapon season as provided in this
101 subparagraph in any other state park under the jurisdiction of the
102 department but shall only do so upon the recommendation of the
103 staff of the department as approved by the commission. The
104 commission shall select participants and set the number of permits
105 to be issued and the length of the special seasons in the manner
106 provided in this subparagraph.

107 (x) The commission may establish and regulate
108 special youth hunts for all nonmigratory game birds and animals
109 outside of the open season on wildlife management areas and on
110 private lands.

111 (f) On fur-bearing animals: The commission may fix the
112 open season on fur-bearing animals between November 1 and March 1
113 next following and fix the open season for hunting opossums,
114 raccoons and bobcats with dogs and guns by licensed hunters from
115 October 1 to February 28 next following; but raccoons and bobcats
116 may be run, hunted, chased or pursued throughout the year with
117 dogs by licensed hunters. The commission may establish an
118 additional open season on raccoon from July 1 through October 1,
119 and the bag limit on raccoon during the additional open season
120 shall be one (1) per party, per night.

121 (g) On rabbits: The season shall open on the Saturday
122 nearest October 15 and run through February 28 next following, and
123 when rabbits are depredating or destroying crops, the owner of the
124 crops or his tenants may shoot the rabbits with guns.

125 (h) On predatory animals: The hunting of predatory
126 animals shall be restricted to the open seasons for hunting any
127 game animal or game bird, using only the firearms, ammunition,
128 primitive weapons or archery equipment legal for use during that



129 open season. Landowners, agricultural leaseholders or their
130 designated agents may take predatory animals year-round on lands
131 owned or leased by them. The taking of any animal or animals
132 other than beavers or coyote by the use of a trap or traps is
133 unlawful except during the time the season is open for the taking
134 of fur-bearing animals. Fox and coyote may be run, chased or
135 pursued with dogs except as provided in Section 49-7-32 year-round
136 by licensed hunters.

137 (i) On migratory birds: The open season for migratory
138 birds shall be the season prescribed by the Federal Migratory Bird
139 Treaty regulations.

140 (j) On nongame gross fish: The season for taking
141 nongame gross fish by hand or with grappling tongs shall be from
142 May 1 to July 15.

143 (k) It is unlawful to trap fox after the closed season
144 for trapping of other fur-bearing animals, except on property
145 owned or leased by the person trapping.

146 (2) It is the intent of the Legislature that the open season
147 for game birds and game animals shall be stabilized unless some
148 unforeseen calamity affecting the resource necessitates earlier
149 change.

150 **SECTION 2.** Section 49-7-33, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
151 amended as follows:

152 49-7-33. Except as otherwise provided in Section 49-7-31(1)
153 it is unlawful to hunt, trap or kill any wild bird or wild animal
154 of any kind with the aid of bait, recordings of bird or animal
155 calls, or electrically amplified imitations of calls of any kind,
156 except a person may use electrically amplified sound devices for
157 hunting coyote and crow. The commission, in its discretion, may
158 relax the restrictions regarding the use of lures or sound devices
159 if a condition arises or exists, as decided by the State Board of
160 Health or county board of health, that may endanger persons or
161 livestock in a certain community, county or area.



162 A person may use liquid scents for any animal or bird.

163 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
164 and after July 1, 2003.

