

# Summary of National Hunting Regulations: Ireland



Updated in June 2016

## HUNTING AND TRAPPING LEGISLATION/ RESOURCES

**Name of main legislation:** The Wildlife Act, 1976 to 2012, which regulates the seasons and huntable species

**Year of publication:** 1976/2000

**Supporting legislation:**

The Firearms Act 1925, as amended, which regulates the issue of firearms/game licences.

The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, which transposes the E.U. Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive into Irish law.

**Legislation updates:** (not aware of any legislation updates in relation to hunting in Ireland)

**Hunting legislation (web link):** <http://www.npws.ie/irish-law>

**Authority in charge of controlling hunting (web link):** National Parks & Wildlife Service  
<http://www.npws.ie/>

**Major inconsistencies or loopholes detected (if yes please describe):** lack of transparency with respect to bag totals for quarry species.

**Derogations (on EU Birds Directive and/or Bern Convention):**

Derogation for air safety: Black-headed gull, Mew gull, European Herring gull, Lesser Black-Backed gull, Great Black-backed gull, Rook, Eurasian Jackdaw, Black-billed Magpie, Common Starling, Northern Lapwing, Eurasian Golden plover, Carrion crow, Common Woodpigeon, Feral pigeon, Eurasian Collared-dove may be captured and killed by any means, arrangements or methods set out in the Wildlife Act throughout the state for air safety. In the case of the Eurasian buzzard, Eurasian Curlew, Barn swallow, Grey heron and Mute swan, this applies only to Dublin or Shannon airport (May 2016 – April 2017) <http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/files/Air%20Safety%20May%202016-April%202017.pdf>

Derogation for State wide: Carrion crow, Black-billed Magpie, Rook, Eurasian Jackdaw, Common Woodpigeon, Feral pigeon, Eurasian Collared-dove may be captured and killed by any means, arrangements or methods set out in the Wildlife Act throughout the state in order to prevent serious damage to crop or to livestock or damage to fauna (May 2016 – April 2017) <http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/files/Declaration%20for%20May%202016-April%202017%20State%20Wide.pdf>

## HUNTING AND TRAPPING: METHODS AND RESTRICTIONS

	Legal methods/restrictions	Notes
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<b>Hunting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Game birds may be hunted under licence and during open seasons (see below)</li> <li>- Authorized hunting methods: shooting and hunting with Hounds, use of decoy allowed for wood pigeon, wild duck and wild geese</li> <li>- It is forbidden to use raffle and semi-automatic shotgun; any poisonous, poisoned or stupefying bait; electrical or other instrument or appliance (including recording apparatus) emitting sound.</li> </ul>	Huntable area: Hunting takes place countrywide except in National Parks and state sanctuaries. Gun clubs also have “no shooting” area.
<b>Trapping</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is forbidden to hunt any wild bird by means of any trap or net, birdlime or any substance of a like nature.</li> <li>- Only authorised for pest species under a valid licence/permission/derogation granted by the Minister (see below)</li> </ul>	

## HUNTING SEASONS AND SPECIES

Open Hunting Season	Legally huntable species	Notes
1 – 30 September	Red Grouse	Throughout the State
1 September – 31 January	Mallard, Teal, Gadwall, Wigeon, Pintail, Shoveler, Scaup, Tufted Duck, Pochard, Goldeneye, Golden Plover, Snipe, Jack Snipe, Ruddy Duck	Throughout the State
1 November – 31 January	Red-legged Partridge, Cock Pheasant, Woodcock, Woodpigeon	Throughout the State
1 September – 31 January	Canada Goose	1 September – 15 October: Throughout the State 16 October – 31 January: The counties of Cavan (exclusive of the townlands of Eonish Island, Rinn, Deramfield) and Leitrim (exclusive of the River Shannon)
1 September – 31 January	Greylag goose	1 September – 15 October: Throughout the State 16 October – 31 January: Lady’s Island, in the county of Wexford Gearagh East & Gearagh West, in the county of Cork.

## TRAPPING SEASONS AND SPECIES

Open Trapping Season	Legally trapped species	Notes
N/A	N/A	N/A

## TRADE AND PEST SPECIES

Legal trade	Notes

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<p>It is forbidden to possess, sell, keep for sale, purchase for resale or engage in taxidermy in respect of any wild bird, whether alive or dead, or the eggs of a wild bird or any parts, products or derivatives thereof</p> <p>Game meat can only be sold in the Republic of Ireland by officially licensed traders.</p>	<p>Practically no game is imported into Ireland.</p>
<p><b>Legislation on “pest species”</b></p>	<p><b>Notes</b></p>
<p>The European Communities (Wildlife Act, 1976) (Amendment) Regulations, 1986 – (S.I. No. 254 of 1986) allow specific derogations to be implemented by way of Ministerial Declarations, which are renewed every four months.</p> <p>Under Air Safety regulations; species including gulls, starlings, curlew, lapwing and golden plover may be killed by a landowner on which a threat to air safety is represented by such species.</p> <p>Hooded crows and magpie may be killed by a landowner where such species are likely to be a threat to public health and vector in the spread of animal disease, to prevent serious damage to livestock, or for the protection of fauna - notably the nests and young of game bird species.</p> <p>The use of cage traps is allowed as a control method for certain species. Authorized methods: trapping – Snares, Cages, nets</p>	<p>Any traps used must comply with the relevant traps and snares regulations of the Wildlife Act.</p>

**NGO:** Birdwatch Ireland

**Contact Person:** Siobhan Egan, Sinead Cummins