

SCIENTIFIC COLLECTOR PERMIT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. A valid Scientific Collector's Permit issued by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) is required to collect, take, or maintain any species of Pennsylvania (PA) fishes, amphibians, reptiles, or aquatic organisms, in any manner, or at any season not permitted by the regulations governing all holders of a valid PA fishing license. Collecting without a valid Scientific Collector's Permit and in a manner not authorized by a fishing license will result in prosecution under all appropriate sections of law, rule, or regulation.
2. No permit shall be valid for any water area, site locale, county, etc., other than that clearly specified on the permit or on a permit amendment of the permit provided by the PFBC. Collection in areas not specified on the permit in any manner or season not authorized by a valid fishing license will invalidate this permit.
3. The permit holder must be present on-site when any collecting takes place under the authorization granted in a Scientific Collector's Permit issued by the PFBC. If the permit holder is not present, those individuals (assistants) collecting will be considered as collecting without a permit.
4. The permit holder is required to notify the appropriate Regional Law Enforcement Manager (see page 4) for the county or enforcement district where scientific collecting is to be conducted at least 24 hours in advance of any collecting activities. The Regional Offices are open Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM. This notification shall include date and location of collection. Failure to provide proper notification will invalidate the Scientific Collector's Permit and those engaged in collection will be regarded as not having a Scientific Collector's Permit.
5. The use of any net or seine larger than four feet square or four feet in diameter or length or any electrofishing gear as a collecting device or aid is illegal unless specifically authorized by the individual Scientific Collector's Permit issued by the PFBC.
6. All organisms collected under authorization of a Scientific Collector's Permit issued by the PFBC which are not returned unharmed to their habitat must be used for the purposes authorized (based on the permit application).
7. All trap nets, gill nets, traps, or similar devices, when set for collecting purposes, must be conspicuously tagged with the name, address, and Collector's Permit number on a tag made of waterproof material and with all letters and numerals in print at least 2 inches in height. In the case of submerged gear, such as trap nets, fyke nets, gill nets, and similar devices, the identification label or tag must be affixed to a float which will be at the water's surface while attached to the trap or net so that identification can be checked without removing the trap or net from the water.
8. All trap nets, gill nets, traps, or similar devices set to capture fishes, amphibians, reptiles, or aquatic invertebrates and operated under the authorization of a Scientific Collector's Permit must be tended daily (checked and cleaned at least once in every 24-hour period).

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9. Upon request, the permit holder will present a copy of the permit to any Waterways Conservation Officer, Deputy Waterways Conservation Officer, or other authorized agent of the PFBC.
10. Lists of endangered, threatened and candidate species of fishes, amphibians, and reptiles are attached to and considered an integral part of each permit. Animals on these lists may only be taken with prior PFBC approval for proven scientific and educational research purposes.
11. All Scientific Collector's Permits issued by the PFBC shall expire and cease to be valid on December 31 of the calendar year of issue, or on the date specified in permit conditions, whichever comes first.
12. Submission of all collection data for the previous year's permit must be completed within 30 days after the expiration of the permit or conclusion of the survey or collecting activity*. The collection data must include site latitude and longitude in decimal degrees, site date and time of day, collection gear used, species/level of identification collected, and total number caught.
*Type 2 permit holders working for PA DEP who enter data through DEP's standard data entry protocol are exempt.
13. Failure to abide by any of the foregoing conditions will result in invalidation and revocation of current permit(s).
14. A Scientific Collector's Permit does not grant persons the authority to trespass on private property.
15. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of State Parks, Bureau of Forestry, and the PA Game Commission may also require permits for action performed on their respective properties.
16. Electrofishing training and safety plan documentation. For health, safety and liability reasons, applicants interested in obtaining a Scientific Collecting Permit for electrofishing need to provide documentation of formal training (e.g., U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Electrofishing course) or other professional experience (e.g., satisfied with a letter of reference from a college professor that provided training, other collector permit holder for electrofishing, working with or trained by state fisheries biologists, etc.) that demonstrates the applicant has been adequately trained in electrofishing methodology/techniques and safety. An electrofishing safety plan also needs to be submitted for review prior to permit approval.
17. Endangered (E) and Threatened (T) species collections and reporting. Surveys for ET species require a permit as per [58 Pa. Code § 75.4. Special permits](#). Scientific Collectors with authorization to collect ET species and collectors observing incidental occurrences of ET species must report ET occurrences online within 48 hours of discovery or identification of an ET species.

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ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

To find up-to-date PFBC regulations, reference the [Pennsylvania Code](#), the Commonwealth's official rules and regulations publication.

[58 Pa. Code § 51.71. Scientific collectors' permits.](#)

[58 Pa. Code § 75.1. Endangered species.](#)

[58 Pa. Code § 75.2. Threatened species.](#)

[58 Pa. Code § 75.3. Candidate species.](#)

[58 Pa. Code § 75.4. Special permits.](#)

[58 Pa. Code § 75.5. Qualified surveyors for endangered and threatened species and their habitat.](#)

Fishing Licenses

PA Fishing Licenses may be obtained through <https://huntfish.pa.gov/> or at [PFBC Licensing Agent locations](#).

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PFBC Regional Law Enforcement Offices

NORTHWEST REGION

Phone: 814-337-0444

FAX: 814-337-0579

Counties

Butler, Lawrence, Clarion, Mercer, Crawford,
Venango, Erie, Warren, Forest

SOUTHWEST REGION

Phone: 814-445-8974

FAX: 814-445-3497

Counties

Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Cambria,
Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Somerset,
Washington, Westmoreland

NORTHCENTRAL REGION

Phone: 814-359-5250

FAX: 814-359-5254

Counties

Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton,
Southern Columbia, Elk, Jefferson,
Lycoming, McKean, Montour,
Northumberland, Potter, Snyder, Tioga,
Union

SOUTHCENTRAL REGION

Phone: 717-486-7087

FAX: 717-486-8227

Counties

Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cumberland,
Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon,
Juniata, Lebanon, Mifflin, Perry, York

NORTHEAST REGION

Phone: 570-477-5717

FAX: 570-477-3221

Counties

Bradford, Carbon, Northern Columbia,
Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Sullivan,
Susquehanna, Wayne, Wyoming

SOUTHEAST REGION

Phone: 717-626-0228

FAX: 717-626-0486

Counties

Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lancaster,
Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton,
Philadelphia, Schuylkill