

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH  
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



**PA 18-114**—sHB 5354  
*Environment Committee*

**AN ACT CONCERNING SNAPPING TURTLES AND RED-EARED SLIDER TURTLES**

**SUMMARY:** This act prohibits the commercial trade of snapping turtles until the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) adopts applicable regulations. The act also (1) establishes limited conditions under which red-eared slider turtles may be imported to or commercially traded in the state and (2) bans releasing red-eared slider turtles to Connecticut's land or waters.

By law, violating the commercial trade ban or applicable regulations is a class C misdemeanor (see Table on Penalties). The act extends this penalty to its ban on importing or releasing red-eared slider turtles.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** October 1, 2018

**SNAPPING TURTLE TRADE**

Under the act, no one can engage in the commercial trade of snapping turtles unless DEEP adopts applicable regulations. Prior law exempted snapping turtles from the law that generally bans, absent applicable DEEP regulations, such things as exporting, selling, or exchanging live wild birds, quadrupeds, reptiles, or amphibians. The act eliminates the exemption.

Existing DEEP regulations allow possessing up to 10 wild adult snapping turtles at a time. The daily and seasonal snapping turtle bag limits are five and 10, respectively. The open season for taking snapping turtles extends from July 15 to September 30 annually (Conn. Agencies Regs. §§ 26-55-3 and 26-66-14).

**RED-EARED SLIDER TURTLES**

Under the act, the commercial trade and import bans do not apply to (1) scientific or educational institutions using red-eared slider turtles for research or educational purposes and (2) those involved in the sale or exchange of red-eared slider turtles with distinctive aberrant color patterns, including albino or amelanistic (i.e., lacking skin pigment) turtles. The latter exemption only applies if the turtle seller keeps a record of the purchaser's name and address on a form the agriculture commissioner prescribes.