

R.S. 56 Chapter 1, Part VII, Subpart K.

§632.5.1. Constrictors and poisonous snakes

A. The importation and/or private possession of constrictor snakes in excess of eight (8) feet long, including but not limited to the following species Apodora papuana (Papuan python), Liasis olivacea, (Olive python), Morelia spilota (Carpet or Diamond python), Morelia kinghorni (Scrub python), Morelia amethystina (Amethystine python), Python natalensis (Southern African python), Python sebae (African Rock python), Python molurus (Indian or Burmese python), Python reticulatus (Reticulated python), any species of the genus Boa (Boa constrictors), and any species of the genus Eunectes (Anacondas), and venomous snakes, (hereinafter “restricted snakes”) obtained in any manner, shall be by permit issued by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries except for animals kept by animal sanctuaries, zoos, aquariums, wildlife research centers, scientific organizations, and medical research facilities as defined in the Animal Welfare Act as found in the United States Code Title 7, Chapter 54, 2132(e).

B. The importation or private possession of venomous snakes, including any species under current taxonomic standing recognized to belong to the Families Viperidae (Pitvipers and Vipers), Elapidae (Cobras and Mambas), Hydrophiidae (Sea Snakes), Atractaspididae (Mole Vipers), as well as the genera Dispholidus, Thelotornis, and Rhabdophis of the Family Colubridae obtained in any manner, shall be only by permit issued by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries except for animals kept by animal sanctuaries, zoos, aquariums, wildlife research centers, scientific organizations, and medical research facilities as defined in the Animal Welfare Act as found in the United States Code Title 7, Chapter 54, 2132(e).

C. The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission is authorized to adopt rules and regulations for the harvest, possession, sale, handling, housing, or importation for species of constrictors and poisonous snakes.

D. Violation of the provisions of this Section or rules adopted pursuant thereto shall constitute a class three violation as provided for in R.S. 56:33.

LAC 76, Part XV, Chapter 1, Section 101, Subsection K.

i. Any person requesting a permit to allow importation and/or private possession of venomous snakes shall demonstrate no less than one year of substantial, practical experience (to consist of no less than 500 hours) in the care, feeding, handling, and/or husbandry of the species for which the permit is sought, or other species within the same zoological family, which are substantially similar in size, characteristics, care, and nutritional requirements to the species for which the permit is sought.

ii. For the purpose of demonstrating compliance, applicants shall submit documentation of such experience, including a detailed description of the experience acquired, the dates and time frames the experience was obtained and the specific location(s) where it was acquired, and references of no less than two individuals having personal knowledge of your stated experience. Personal reference letters do not need to be authored by venomous reptile permit holders. Additional documentation may include records of prior permits for the keeping of venomous reptiles, employment records, or any other competent documentation of the required experience.

iii. Documented educational experience in zoology or other relevant biological sciences obtained at the college or technical school level or above may substitute for up to 250 hours of the required experience. The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries shall be responsible for judgment of the adequacy of the documentation.

iv. Applicant must be at least 18 years old at the time of application.

v. Notification of relocation of facilities shall be made within thirty (30) days of a move, and permittee shall be allowed to keep the animals in the same setup(s) until the inspection of the facility and/or room and cages within which the animals are to be kept at the new location can be undertaken by Department of Wildlife & Fisheries personnel.

vi. In the event of an escape where a constrictor snake in excess of eight (8) feet or a venomous snake escapes its cage and its secure containment room, and becomes outside the control of the permit holder and/or owner, notification shall immediately be made to the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries emergency notification number.

vii. A secure transport container shall be required to transport venomous snakes away from any field collection sites.

viii. Those persons who can prove prior ownership of restricted snakes have 90 days from the final ruling to obtain a permit from the Department.

ix. Restricted snakes shall be kept in secure, escape proof enclosures with doors that lock, or such secure enclosures shall be enclosed in secure, escape proof rooms that are kept locked except when the animals are being fed, the cages are being cleaned, or otherwise worked by the person trained and experienced in proper care, handling, and use of the species being maintained. Entrance doors shall be kept securely locked on all outdoor enclosures to prevent escape and unauthorized intrusion and the enclosure shall be equipped with barriers to prevent visitors from falling into enclosures that are constructed below ground level.

x. Facilities that house constrictor snakes in excess of eight (8) feet or venomous snakes in private possession shall be open to inspection prior to issuance of a permit and at other times deemed necessary to ensure compliance with the permit by Department of Wildlife and Fisheries personnel or other persons authorized by Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to perform such inspections.

xi. Any non-permitted individual in possession of restricted snakes shall have thirty (30) days to obtain a permit. Any individual who possesses restricted snakes in a manner not compliant with this rule shall have thirty (30) days to demonstrate compliance to Department of Wildlife and Fisheries personnel. Any individual who remains non-compliant after thirty (30) days shall forfeit all restricted snakes to Department of Wildlife and Fisheries personnel, who may dispose of the snakes in any manner.

2. A first violation of this section will result in a five-year period of probation; a violation during the probationary period shall be considered a second violation, and will result in a one-year suspension of the permit; a third violation will result in a five-year suspension of a permit.

L. Except as provided in subsection K, whoever violates the provisions of this rule shall be fined not less than twenty-five dollars nor more than one hundred dollars, or imprisoned for not less than thirty days, or both.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 56:6(10), (13), (15) and (25), R.S. 56:23, and R.S. 56:632.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, LR 20:1135 (October 1994), amended LR 30:2495 (November 2004) LR 31:2569 (October 2005).